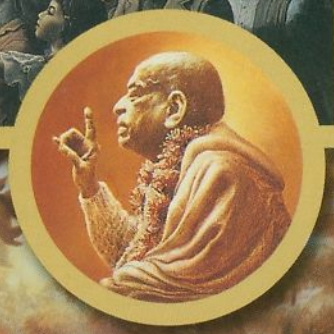
Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.

BACK TO GODHEAD



The Magazine of the Hare Krishna March / April 2000 • $4.00 / £4.50

RŪPA AND SANĀTANA

Statesmen Turned Saints

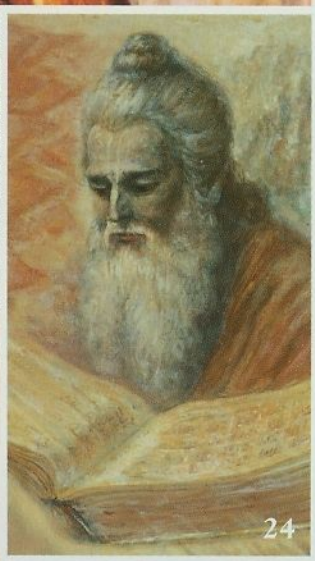
ALSO:

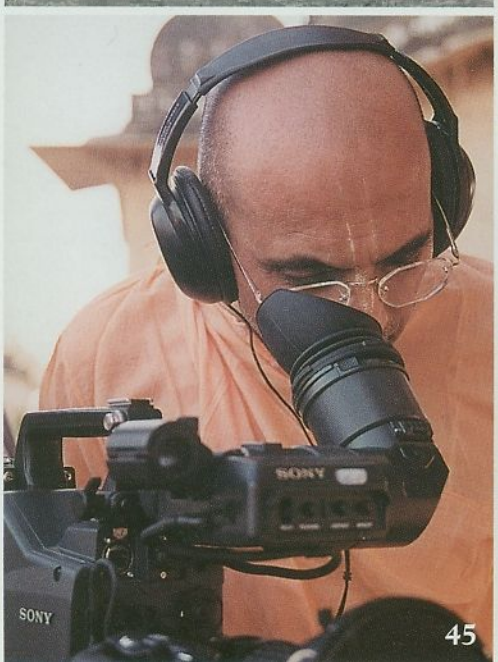
God and the Absolute Truth
The Root of Anger
What Exactly Is "Vedic"?
Natural Wealth from the Cow
The Light of the Gītā

Assisting you in your quest for the Absolute Truth

Back to Godh

Founded 1944 • Vol. 34, No. 2 • March/April 2000





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COVER Five hundred years ago, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī left their high posts in the government of Bengal to join Lord Caitanya's new Hare Kṛṣṇa movement and write numerous books on the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. To read about their lives, please see the article beginning on page 52. (Painting by Rāmadāsa Abhirāma Dāsa.)

WELCOME

In this issue of *Back to Godhead,* two articles deal with the history of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. Because we are all spiritual beings with an eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa, or God, the essence of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement—Kṛṣṇa consciousness—is eternal. Still, at certain points in history great spiritual leaders spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness with such success that movements take shape.

We can trace the modern Hare Kṛṣṇa movement back to Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa who appeared in Bengal some five hundred years ago. Lord Caitanya introduced the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa as the religion for the age, and He engaged His leading disciples in writing dozens of books detailing the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Two of the most important authors were Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī, whose stories appear in this issue.

Beginning in the late 1960s, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda carried the teachings of Lord Caitanya and the Gosvāmīs around the world. Śrīla Prabhupāda's life story is told in the Indian television series *Abhay Charan,* now on video. In this issue, we introduce you to *Abhay Charan.*

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

—Nāgarāja Dāsa, Editor

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead and source of all material and spiritual worlds

Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Kṛṣṇa's most recent incarnation, taught Kṛṣṇa consciousness through the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa

OUR PURPOSES

- To help all people discern reality from illusion, spirit from matter, the eternal from the temporary.
- To expose the faults of materialism.
- To offer guidance in the Vedic techniques of spiritual life.
- To preserve and spread the Vedic culture.
- To celebrate the chanting of the holy names of God as taught by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- To help every living being remember and serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead.

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement

FOUNDER
(under the direction of His Divine Grace
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda)
His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

EDITOR Nāgarāja Dāsa • **ASSOCIATE EDITORS** Drutakarmā Dāsa, Jagajīvana Dāsa, Kālakaṇṭha Dāsa, Mukunda Goswami, Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī, Viśākhā Devī Dāsī • **EDITORIAL ADVISOR** Hridayānanda Dāsa Goswami • **DESIGN/LAYOUT** Yamarāja Dāsa • **PROOFREADERS** Guru Kṛṣṇa Dāsa, Ijya Dāsa, Keśīhanta Dāsa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛpā Dāsa • **EDITORIAL ASSISTANT** Kamalā Devī Dāsī • **ARCHIVES** Raṇajit Dāsa • **SUBSCRIBER SERVICES** Arcī Devī Dāsī, Dulāla Candra Dāsa, Lokasākṣinī Devī Dāsī • **CIRCULATION DIRECTOR** Mallikā Devī Dāsī • **ACCOUNTS** Puṇya Kīrti Dāsa

INDIA: **PUBLISHING COORDINATOR** Yudhiṣṭhira Dāsa • **PRODUCTION** Sac-cid-ānanda Dāsa • **MARKETING** Raghunātha Dāsa • **ACCOUNTS** Sahadeva Dāsa • **SPECIAL PROJECTS** Ms. Shashi Bhagnari • **SUBSCRIBER SERVICES** Hari-priyā Devī Dāsī, Mañjarī Devī Dāsī, Trivikrama Dāsa

EDITORIAL OFFICES Send editorial correspondence to BTG, P.O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616, USA. Phone: (904) 462-7794. Fax: (904) 462-7893. Or BTG, 33 Janki Kutir, Next to State Bank of Hyderabad, Juhu, Mumbai 400 049, India. Phone: (022) 618-1718. Fax: (022) 618-4827. E-mail: editors@bbt.se

SUBSCRIPTIONS *Back to Godhead* is published six times a year. For a one-year subscription send $24 to Back to Godhead, P.O. Box 255, Sandy Ridge, NC 27046, USA. Or call toll-free: 1-800-800-3284. In Canada call our 800 number or send $20.95 Canadian.

For subscriptions outside the US and Canada add $3. Payment in US funds (payable on a US bank) must accompany your order.

In the UK send £18.99 to BTG UK Ltd., Bhaktivedanta Manor, Dharam Marg, Hilfield Lane, Watford, Herts. WD2 8EZ.

In South Africa send R240 to Back to Godhead, P.O. Box 56003, Chatsworth 4030, South Africa.

SUBSCRIBER SERVICE To change your address or clear up any questions about your subscription, write to BTG Service Center, P.O. Box 255, Sandy Ridge, NC 27046, USA. Or call 1-800-800-3284. Or use e-mail (btgsubs@bbt.se). We can answer your questions faster if you send a recent mailing label or invoice. Please allow eight weeks for changes to show on your mailing label.

PREPRESS & PRINTING Interprint, Clearwater, Florida, USA

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Back to Godhead (ISSN 0005-3643, USPS 604-170) is published bi-monthly (six times a year) for $24 per year by Back To Godhead, 18024 NW 112th Blvd., Alachua, FL 32615. Periodicals postage paid at Alachua, Florida, and additional mailing offices.

CANADA POST AGREEMENT #: 0571016

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Back to Godhead, P.O. Box 255, Sandy Ridge, NC 27046.

Letters

Ready to Subscribe

The special Māyāpur issue [Nov./Dec. 1999] was fantastic! I'm ready to subscribe now.

Mādhavānanda Dāsa
Los Angeles, California

Top of the Line

I want you to know you're top of the line with me and my husband of forty-eight years. Every word I hear and read is Godsent, and we really appreciate Prabhupāda's words. Two of his books go with us everywhere we go. May God bless all of you associated with this great person's writings. You are helping me greatly by keeping in touch. I am sixty-eight-years young and getting younger every day with people like you.

Marilu Bekkala
Seattle, Washington

Worship of Devas

In Chapter 7, verse 20–23, of the *Bhagavad-gītā,* Kṛṣṇa describes the worshipers of *devas* (demigods) as less intelligent. But in Chapter 10 He describes Himself as many *devas,* such as Indra, Śiva, and Brahmā. So is Chapter 10 saying that worship of the *devas* is all right?

Dhenulover
Via the Internet

OUR REPLY: In Chapter 10 Lord Kṛṣṇa reveals that the best of everything in this world represents Him. In that sense these things are Kṛṣṇa, but Kṛṣṇa doesn't suggest we worship Him by worshiping examples of His opulence. He says that among fish He is the shark, but we don't worship sharks. Similarly, because Indra, Śiva, and Brahmā are chief among the *devas,* they represent some aspect of Kṛṣṇa's unlimited power, but Kṛṣṇa says in the ninth chapter that worshiping them is *avidhi pūrvakam,* or against the rules. Because everything in the material world is Kṛṣṇa's energy, it is in a sense Kṛṣṇa. But Kṛṣṇa tells us to worship Him—the person—and not His energy.

Room for Everyone?

I have subscribed to your magazine because I seek more devotion toward the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. I am a homosexual, and I do not follow the beliefs of the ISKCON movement but the traditional Hindu practices. Throughout my readings in the *Vedas,* the *Gītā,* and other literary sources, I haven't found any information regarding homosexuality. I would like to know ISKCON's teachings on homosexuality and what you offer young people like me?

Gregory Garvin
Alexandria, Virginia

OUR REPLY: ISKCON encourages everyone to perfect his life by following the practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In replying to your question, we feel it's important for you to first understand what ISKCON is all about. The basic points of our philosophy, as taught by Lord Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* are that we are all spirit souls, eternally related with Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord. The purpose of human life is to awaken our original loving relationship with Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not a question of believing or not believing something; Kṛṣṇa consciousness is part of our true nature. Somehow or other we have to reawaken that consciousness and become purified of material desires, rooted in the false idea that we are these bodies.

The practices of ISKCON are all meant to purify our consciousness and free us from bodily identification. Spiritual life must be more than choosing which religion agrees with me. The question should be, "How will I become purified?"

In this age, the scriptures recommend the chanting of God's names as the only means to awaken our original consciousness. To chant effectively, we

must give up sinful acts. The scriptures stress that we must give up gambling, meat-eating, intoxication, and illicit sex, defined as any sex not performed for procreation. Since homosexual acts cannot produce a child, they must ultimately be given up to get the benefits of chanting the Lord's holy names.

Still, one unable to give up sex at once should chant, go to the temple, read Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, and so on. Everyone can do these things. They will help, but progress will be slow unless one gives up sinful activities.

Our bodies and our particular conditioning result from our individual karma. Kṛṣṇa loves you and is happy that you are seeking guidance in your spiritual life. He knows your personal struggles and limitations. What He rewards, ultimately, is your sincerity and your effort to come closer to Him.

Concern for The Environment

I love reading your magazine. It is one of the only ways I can be in contact with other devotees. Still, I'm concerned that with so much emphasis on leaving the material world and our bodies to get to the spiritual world with Kṛṣṇa, this philosophy is creating an ethic that disregards the earth we live on. Why isn't nature revered and loved just as much as Kṛṣṇa? Is not the world, our environment, Kṛṣṇa too? How can ISKCON join forces with the environmental movement to heal the relationship between people and land?

Lauren Rentenbach
Prescott, Arizona

OUR REPLY: You're right in saying that as devotees of Kṛṣṇa we should respect His creation, and Śrīla Prabhupāda always taught that. (See *Divine Nature*, by Mukunda Goswami and Drutakarmā Dāsa, available from our Hare Kṛṣṇa Bazaar.) Prabhupāda himself showed respect for everything, because he knew that everything is connected to Kṛṣṇa.

Still, we don't equate Kṛṣṇa and His nature. We accept the philosophy of "simultaneous oneness and difference"—Kṛṣṇa is one with His creation and different from it at the same time. So although we respect nature as Kṛṣṇa's energy, we don't elevate it to the status of God.

You shouldn't get any argument from devotees about the sanctity of nature. What you might find is debate about how much of our energy should go into conservation. Prabhupāda taught us to try to live simply, and most of us could improve in that area. But Prabhupāda never told us, for example, to go out and raise money for environmental causes.

Still, Prabhupāda did encourage us to spend money to set up Kṛṣṇa conscious rural communities based on farming and cow protection, activities that improve the environment. He also liked nice gardens at his temples, and he argued against needless killing of animals, needless cutting of forests, and so on. He set goals that require us to collect and spend money in ways beneficial to creating a cleaner environment, one more hospitable to the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Ultimately, Prabhupāda taught that Kṛṣṇa consciousness solves all problems. So our mission is to give people Kṛṣṇa. Environmental problems are only one of hundreds of problems that concern people. There are so many causes we could take up. But Prabhupāda taught that trying to solve problems one by one is like trying to water a tree by watering its leaves and branches rather than its root.

Again, we agree that devotees could improve in their respect for the environment. And they will—as they advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and learn more and more how to use the energy of Kṛṣṇa in His service.

Please write us at: BTG, P.O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616, USA. Or: BTG, 33 Janki Kutir, Next to State Bank of Hyderabad, Juhu, Mumbai 400 049, India. Phone: (022) 618-1718. E-mail: editors@bbt.se

What Is the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement?

Founded in 1966 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) carries on in the modern world a great ancient tradition rooted in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the teachings Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke five millenniums ago. The *Gītā* and the other Vedic scriptures declare Kṛṣṇa to be the original person, God Himself, who appears periodically in this world to liberate all living beings.

Only five hundred years ago, Kṛṣṇa descended as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to teach the most sublime and effective means of meditation for the present day: the chanting of the names of God, especially as found in the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

Today members of ISKCON continue Lord Caitanya's movement by distributing the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra all over the world.

Pronunciation

We spell Sanskrit words and names by a phonetic system that lets you know how to say each word. Pronounce short **a** like the **u** in b**u**t, long **ā** like the **a** in f**a**r (and held twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce **e** like the **a** in ev**a**de, long **ī** like the **i** in p**i**que. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **ri**m, and **c** like the **ch** in **ch**air. Pronounce consonants like **ch, jh,** and **dh** as in staun**ch-h**eart, hed**ge-h**og, and re**d-h**ot. Pronounce **ś** and **ṣ** like **sh.** So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

Spiritual Names

ISKCON members receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or His great devotees, combined with Dāsa, for men, or Dāsī, for women, both of which mean "servant." For instance, the name Kṛṣṇa Dāsa means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

RISE ABOVE ANIMAL CONSCIOUSNESS

If we pursue only bodily happiness
and fail to inquire into the cause of our suffering,
are we any better than the animals?

Adapted from a lecture given in Buffalo, New York, on April 23, 1969

by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

---

ṛṣabha uvāca
nāyaṁ deho deha-bhājāṁ nṛloke
kaṣṭān kāmān arhate viḍ-bhujāṁ ye
tapo divyaṁ putrakā yena sattvaṁ
śuddhyed yasmād brahma-saukhyaṁ tv anantam

"Lord Ṛṣabhadeva told His sons: My dear boys, of all the living entities who have accepted material bodies in this world, one who has been awarded this human form should not work hard day and night simply for sense gratification, which is available even for dogs and hogs that eat stool. One should engage in penance and austerity to attain the divine position of devotional service. By such activity, one's heart is purified, and when one attains this position, he attains eternal, blissful life, which is transcendental to material happiness and which continues forever." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5.5.1)

RṢABHADEVA IS ACCEPTED AS AN incarnation of Godhead. He appeared on earth long, long ago and was the father of King Bharata, from whose name this planet is called Bhārata-varṣa in the Vedic literature. Ṛṣabhadeva had one hundred sons, of whom Bharata was the eldest. Bharata was very intelligent, so his father entrusted the kingdom to him. Before retirement, Ṛṣabhadeva gave His sons spiritual instructions, which are recorded in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.*

Ṛṣabhadeva advises, "My dear sons, the human form of life is not meant for sense gratification."

Ṛṣabhadeva uses the word *deha-bhājām:* "of those who have accepted a material body." This is very significant. According to Vedic literature, the material world is only one fourth of the complete creation of God. Three fourths of God's creation is the spiritual world. That

One who is sensible, who is inquisitive and serious, should try to understand, "Why have I been put into material conditional life?"

• • •

information you will find in *Bhagavad-gītā.* The material world is a fraction of the whole creation. As far as you can see in the sky, you see this universe. But this is only one universe. There are unlimited universes clustered together, and that cluster is called the material world.

Beyond that cluster is the spiritual sky. That fact is also mentioned in the *Bhagavad-gītā: paras tasmāt tu bhāvo 'nyo 'vyakto 'vyaktāt sanātanaḥ.* The Lord says, "Beyond this material world is another nature, which is eternal." There is no history of its beginning or end. That is eternal: no beginning, no end.

Untraceable History

Vedic religion is called *sanātana-dharma,* "eternal religion," because no one can trace out when the Vedic religion began. Every religion in our present experience has a history. The Christian religion has a history—two thousand years old. The Buddhist religion has a history—2,600 years. The Muslim religion has a history—one thousand years. But if you trace the Vedic religion, you cannot find a starting date. There is no date. No historian can give one. Therefore it is called *sanātana-dharma.*

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa says, "There is another nature, which is eternal." The material creation is not eternal. We say, "God created." That means that before creation God existed. Therefore God is not under the creation. If God were under the creation, how could He create? He existed before the creation; therefore He is eternal.

Besides an eternal, spiritual God, there is also a spiritual nature, or sky, where there are innumerable spiritual planets. And there are innumerable spiritual living entities. Some of them, who are not fit to live in the spiritual world, are sent to the material world. The same idea is expressed in Milton's *Paradise Lost.* We conditioned souls are practically living in a place after "paradise lost." We should understand this point.

Here the specific instruction is *deha-bhājām,* which means that we have willingly accepted the material body. Actually, we are spirit souls; we should not have accepted the material body. But we have, and we cannot trace the history of when and why we did so.

There are 8,400,000 forms of living entities: 900,000 species in the water, 2,000,000 species of plants and vegetables, and so on. Unfortunately, this Vedic knowledge is not taught in any university, but these are facts. If people are interested in research, let them research why the Vedic knowledge says there are 8,400,000 species of life. Darwin's theory of the evolution of organic matter is very prominent in educational institutions. But the *Padma Purāṇa* and other authoritative Vedic scriptures explain how the living entities have different forms of body, how they are evolving one after another—everything is there. Evolution is not a new idea. People are stressing only Darwin's theory. But in the Vedic literature we have immense information of the living condition in the material world.

Apart from that, here it is said, *deha-bhājām:* "those who have accepted this material body." That means there are many who have not accepted the material body. But in the material world people have no experience of living entities who have not accepted a material body. People don't know that there is a spiritual world. The innumerable living entities in so many universes in the material world are only a fraction of all living entities.

Those in the material world, with the material body, are condemned. For example, people in prison are condemned by the government. But their number is only a fraction of the whole population, not that the whole population of the state goes to prison. Some criminals, who disobey the laws of the state, are put into the prison. Similarly, the conditioned souls within the material world are only a fraction of the living entities in the creation of God. Because they have declined to obey or abide by the orders of Kṛṣṇa, or God, they have been put into the material world.

Sensible Inquiry

One who is sensible, who is inquisitive and serious, should try to understand, "Why have I been put into material conditional life?" That should be the inquiry. That is called *brahma-jijñāsā.* In the *Vedānta-sūtra* this is the first inquiry. People should be educated to the standard of life where they will be inquisitive to know, "Why have I been put into conditional life? I do not wish to suffer."

Animals are always suffering, but they do not mind it. Recently I was in Hawaii, and in front of my house was a man who kept animals and birds for slaughter. I was telling my students that we could say to the animals, "Oh, my dear animals, why are you standing here? Go away. You are going to be slaughtered." But the animals don't have the intelligence to go. Even in the slaughterhouse they don't go away.

Suffering without knowledge, without remedy, means animal life. One who cannot understand his suffering, who thinks, "Oh, I am very well off. I am very well situated," is in animal consciousness. One should be cognizant of the miseries of his life. One should know that there is suffering in birth, there is suffering in death, there is suffering in old age, and there is suffering in disease.

And one should be inquisitive. That

is the real research: how to avoid death, how to avoid birth. We have suffered during our birth. We have suffered as a child, as a baby. We remained within the abdomen of our mother, tightly placed in an airtight bag for nine months, bitten by worms, unable to move, unable to protest. But we have forgotten.

Our sufferings are there. The mother is taking so much care undoubtedly; still, the child is crying. Why does the child cry? Because it is suffering but cannot express itself. There are bugs biting or pains somewhere within, and the child is crying, crying, but the mother does not know how to pacify the child.

In this way our suffering begins from the womb of our mother. And then we do not wish to go to school, but we are forced to go to a school. We do not wish to study, but the teachers give us tasks. If you just analyze your life, you will see that it is full of suffering. But we make no inquiry into how to stop that suffering. That lack of inquiry is not education. Therefore the *Brahma-sūtra* says, *athāto brahma-jijñāsā:* "Now you should inquire about why you are suffering. Is there any remedy for suffering? If there is, then you must take it. You must take advantage of the remedy." But we are callous. We do not care for the remedy, and that is not good.

Therefore Ṛṣabhadeva says to His sons, "My dear sons, now you have this opportunity. Out of 8,400,000 lives, take . . ."

Forget Ṛṣabhadeva's sons. I will speak to the American boys and girls gathered here. Now you have a very nice body, a very beautiful body, a very nice country. You have no poverty. In so many ways you have an advantage over other nations. So accept this instruction of Ṛṣabhadeva to His sons. Ṛṣabhadeva instructions were not meant only for His sons; they are meant for the whole human race.

The Pleasure Of Hogs and Dogs

Ṛṣabhadeva said, "My dear sons, the body is not meant for sense gratification like that of the cats and dogs and hogs. To spoil our life by hard work for sense gratification is not very good."

Take that instruction into your life also. You are very nicely placed, but according to Ṛṣabhadeva's instruction, you should not spoil this beautiful life simply for sense gratification. Why? Ṛṣabhadeva answered: "That sense gratification is available to the stool-eater, the hog. You should not imitate the hogs." You see? I was surprised to hear from one of my principal disciples that some hippies have begun to worship hogs. Your beautiful life, beautiful education, beautiful situation should be used for a beautiful end, not for degrading yourself to the platform of hog worship.

Ṛṣabhadeva says, "My dear boys, sense gratification after hard work day and night is available in the hog's life. That arrangement is not very important. The human form of life is meant for a different purpose." And Ṛṣabhadeva explains that purpose:

Vṛndāvana, India

Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare

PRONUNCIATION: *ha-ray, krish-na, ra-ma* (rhymes with "drama")

"The human form of life is meant for austerity and penance."

You will find in the Vedic histories many, many exalted emperors and kings. They also practiced austerity and penance. Dhruva Mahārāja, Prahlāda Mahārāja, Ambarīṣa Mahārāja, Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja—they were all kings. They were called *rājarṣi,* which means that although they were most opulent kings, still they were great sages. Ṛṣabhadeva advises that persons who have the opportunity of the human form of life—with facility for economic welfare and for giving everything very nicely—should use that opportunity for a better life. They should perform austerity to attain pure existence.

The austerity we perform in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is not at all troublesome. It is pleasant. You can ask our students who are practicing it. They are very pleased to practice this austerity. And if you practice it, your existence will be purified. The difference between animal life and human life is that human life is more purified. The human being has better consciousness than the animal. And if you purify your existence more, you are gradually elevated to the spiritual existence, which is completely pure life.

Ṛṣabhadeva advises, "My dear boys, don't spoil your life simply for sense gratification, but voluntarily accept some austerity and penance so that your existence will be purified. You are seeking happiness. Whatever happiness you are inclined to in the material world is only limited. But if you purify your existence and some way or other become promoted to your spiritual existence, then you get the greatest pleasure." *Brahma-saukhyaṁ tv anantam.*

Brahman means "the greatest" and refers to spiritual existence. There is Brahman life, and there is Brahman pleasure. In Brahman pleasure there is also dancing, there are young girls, young boys—everything. Whatever we find in the material world is a perverted reflection of the spiritual world. So if you want unlimited happiness, unlimited knowledge, and eternal life, you should not spoil this very nice opportunity simply for sense gratification, but adjust it to accept the life of austerity to promote yourself to the spiritual life. Then you will get unlimited happiness, unlimited life, unlimited pleasure. That is the sum and substance of this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

We have literature and magazines to explain all these points. We have our *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is, Teachings of Lord Caitanya, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, The Nectar of Devotion, Easy Journey to Other Planets.* The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is meant for giving a finishing touch to your present position. Don't take it otherwise. You are all educated. I request you, try to understand this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement and take it very seriously. You will be happy. And because people of other countries are following your progress, if you take the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement seriously and rightly, the whole face of the world will change. It will be turned into the spiritual world.

Of course, we do not expect that everyone will accept this philosophy, but even if one percent of the population of the world accepts it, the world will change. The *Bhagavad-gītā* explains that if some principal man accepts some theory or philosophy, others follow.

We have our center here. I request you all to try to understand the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement and purify yourself. The process of purification is very simple. We are simply chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. My fervent request to you all is this: You are very nicely placed. Please try to understand this philosophy. Make your life happy so that the people of the world will be happy by following your example.

Thank you very much.

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Glossary

Ācārya—a spiritual master who teaches by example.

Balarāma—Lord Kṛṣṇa's first expansion, who acts in the role of Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother.

Battle of Kurukṣetra—an epic battle for rule of the world, fought five thousand years ago.

Bhagavad-gītā—the sacred book in which Lord Kṛṣṇa gives the essence of knowledge to His friend and disciple Arjuna.

Bhakti—devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura—the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Bhakti-yoga—linking with the Supreme Lord through devotional service.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu—the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who appeared five hundred years ago to teach the chanting of the names of God as the religion for the present age.

Dharma—(1) ordained duties or religious principles; (2) one's eternal, natural occupation (i.e., devotional service to the Lord).

Godhead—the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Reality, progressively realized first as the impersonal all-pervasive oneness, more fully as the Supersoul within the heart of every living being, and ultimately as the all-opulent Supreme Person.

Gurukula—a school where children learn the philosophy and practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness along with regular academic subjects (literally "the place of the guru").

Hare Kṛṣṇa—the great mantra Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

ISKCON—the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Japa—individual chanting of names of God, usually while counting on beads.

Kali-yuga—in the endlessly repeated cycle of four cosmic ages, the present and worst age, the Age of Quarrel, of which 5,000 of 432,000 years have passed.

Karma—material action; its inevitable reaction; or the law by which such action and reaction are governed.

Kīrtana—congregational singing of names of God, usually accompanied by cymbals (*karatālas*) and drums (*mṛdaṅgas*).

Kṛṣṇa—the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His original transcendental form (see "Godhead").

Mahābhārata—the epic history of ancient India, a history in which the *Bhagavad-gītā* appears as the most important and well-known text.

Māyā—illusion; the energy of the Supreme Lord that deludes living entities into forgetting their spiritual nature and forgetting God.

Māyāvādī—one who regards the Absolute Truth as ultimately impersonal or void.

Modes of nature—the three qualities (goodness, passion, and ignorance) that hold sway over all action in the material world.

Nityānanda—the incarnation of Lord Balarāma who appeared with Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Prasādam—vegetarian food that has been prepared for the Lord and offered to Him with devotion (literally "mercy").

Purāṇas—Vedic histories.

Rādhārāṇī—Lord Kṛṣṇa's consort and pleasure potency.

Rathayātrā—"chariot festival": a festival in which the form of Kṛṣṇa is borne in procession on a large canopy-topped chariot or float, especially the festival originating in Purī, India, for Jagannātha (Lord Kṛṣṇa, "the Lord of the universe").

Sannyāsa—the renounced life of a man who relinquishes home to dedicate himself fully to the Supreme.

Śrī—an honorific meaning "opulent" (similarly: Śrīla, Śrīmad, Śrīmān, Śrīmatī).

Śrīla Prabhupāda—His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam—the most important of the eighteen *Purāṇas,* which tells of the nature and pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotees.

Supersoul—the form of the Lord who resides in every heart along with the individual soul.

Upaniṣads—the 108 essential philosophical treatises that appear within the *Vedas.*

Varṇāśrama—the Vedic social system. It organizes society into four occupational and four spiritual divisions (*varṇas* and *āśramas*). The members of the four *varṇas* are the *brāhmaṇas* (intellectuals and priests), the *kṣatriyas* (administrators and soldiers), the *vaiśyas* (farmers and businessmen), and the *śūdras* (laborers and artisans). The members of the four *āśramas* are the *brahmacārīs* (celibate students), *gṛhasthas* (married people), *vānaprasthas* (retired people), and *sannyāsīs* (renunciants).

Vṛndāvana—the transcendental abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa, mirrored on earth as the town in India where Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago.

Vaiṣṇava—a devotee of the Supreme Lord (from the word *Viṣṇu*).

Vedas—the hymns of knowledge revealed by the Lord Himself at the beginning of creation.

Vedic—pertaining to the culture in which the *Vedas* and related scriptures guide all aspects of human life.

Viṣṇu—any form of the Personality of Godhead (see "Godhead"); the forms the Lord manifests to create and sustain the material world.

Snehal Ranade (right), the author's granddaughter, pets one-day-old Nandinī as the calf's mother, Jaya Rādhe, looks on. Below, the oxen Bhīma and Nakula pull a plow through a rice field.

Natural Wealth From the Cow

Mutual respect between man and animal is the key to a community's economic base.

Text and photos by Lavaṅgalatikā Devī Dāsī

JAYA RĀDHE, a young cow with her first calf, Nandinī, walks proudly. It seems she knows she's a descendant of Kāmadhenu, the wish-fulfilling cow said in the *Purāṇas* to be the original cow. At first Jaya Rādhe wouldn't allow us to milk her, but we gained her trust with much petting and coaxing and rubbing under her neck. We didn't like to tie her legs, the common practice; that would have been a battle, and we didn't want to force her. She gives milk now, but when she feels she has reached her limit, she'll kick hard, and further persuasion is useless.

Nandinī has become fat and beautiful with plentiful milk from her mother. We don't treat our cows as milk machines, as is done in commercial dairies. There, calves are separated from their mothers and made to suffer the indignity of drinking milk from a bucket or a bottle, or worse—starved to death or sent to the slaughterhouse so that the master can have all the milk.

It's the time of the first monsoon rain, and three young oxen—Bhīma, Nakula, and Sahadeva—gallop across the field. Their heads are smeared with soft red earth they've dug up with their horns. They've seen an intruder, a strange bull on their land, so they chase him out, tails and heads held high, snorting, eyes shining brightly, hooves thudding, followed by little black Nandinī, who is ready for anything.

Soon they'll be working hard under the yoke of the plow, in the water and deep, soft mud of the rice fields, and they will become quiet and sober. But when all the plowing is over, the farmer will bow down to their feet in respect to thank them and tell them they are free to go. Such reciprocation between man and animal, and the idea of *go-sevā,* or service to the cow, is new to us in the West who have been brought up to believe we are the lords of all we survey and nature is ours to exploit.

My urbanite stepson, a doctor, came to visit and saw the few milking cows in their barn, and then the bull, oxen, and older calves in another cow shed. He was surprised.

"These don't give any milk? What's wrong with them?"

"They're bulls."

"Oh. Why do you keep them then?"

"Are your sons not just as good as your daughters?" I asked.

And I told him that all our cows, bulls, and calves have lifetime protection. I told him that to give milk, a cow must have a calf, who must be engaged and cared for his or her whole life; that bulls are even more important than milking cows because they plow the field, carry loads on the bullock cart, and turn the oil press to extract oil from seeds; and that both cows and bulls produce dung, which is more valuable than gold or even the famous Kohinoor diamond, according to eminent Indian economist Venishakar M. Vasu, because it fertilizes the soil.

The farmland of India had remained fertile for hundreds of thousands of years by the

application of cow dung. But now, because of cow slaughter, India has a shortage of cow dung for fertilizer, and chemical fertilizer has ruined the land, killing the soil.

Venishakar M. Vasu says, "If we destroy our cattle wealth, not even God can save this country."

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes in a purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.2.29):

> As he [Lord Kṛṣṇa] grew to be six or seven years old, the Lord was given charge of looking after the cows and bulls in the grazing grounds. He was the son of a well-to-do landholder who owned hundreds of thousands of cows, and according to Vedic economics, one is considered to be a rich man by the strength of his store of grains and cows. Human society needs only sufficient grain and sufficient cows to solve its economic problems. With these two things humanity can solve its eating problem. All other things but these two are artificial necessities created by man to kill his valuable life at the human level and waste his time in things which are not needed.
>
> Lord Kṛṣṇa, as the teacher of human society, personally showed by His acts that the mercantile community, or the *vaiśyas,* should herd cows and bulls and give protection to the valuable animals. According to *smṛti* regulations, the cow is the mother and the bull is the father of the human being. The cow is the mother because just as one sucks the breast of the mother, human society takes cow's milk. Similarly the bull is the father of human society because the father earns for the children just as the bull tills the ground to produce food grains. Human society will kill its spirit of life by killing the father and the mother.
>
> It is mentioned herein that the beautiful cows and bulls were of various checkered colors—red, black, blue, green, yellow, ash, etc. And because of their colors and healthy smiling features, the atmosphere was enlivening.

We can fix our minds on the Lord as He is described in the verse on which Śrīla Prabhupāda is commenting: "While herding the very beautiful bulls, the Lord, who was the reservoir of all opulence and fortune, used to blow His flute, and thus He enlivened His faithful followers, the cowherd boys." And we can do as Śrīla Prabhupāda has instructed us: protect the beautiful cows and bulls and benefit human society.

Lavaṅgalatikā Devī Dāsī is an American disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda. She and her Indian husband care for cows on their land in Maharashtra, India.

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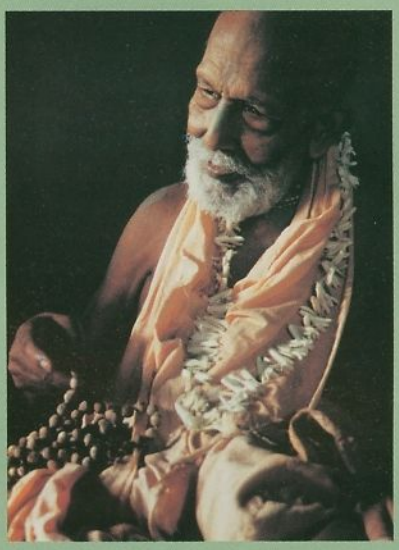
IN MEMORIAM

Śrīla Bhakti Pramod Purī Mahārāja

ŚRĪLA BHAKTI PRAMOD Purī Mahārāja passed away in Jagannātha Purī last November 22. Purī Mahārāja had been the oldest living disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Born in 1898 in East Bengal (now Bangladesh), in his youth he encountered the teachings of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura (Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī's father) and took up Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He met Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī in 1915 and received initiation from him in 1923, receiving the name Praṇavānanda Brahmacārī.

A college graduate, Praṇavānanda Brahmacārī worked at the Port Commission in Calcutta while living in the ashram of his spiritual master's temple on Ultadanga Junction Road. In 1925 he gave up his job to dedicate himself to his spiritual master's mission. A year later, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī made him co-editor of the Kṛṣṇa conscious daily paper *Nadiya Prakash.* After four years he became an editor of *Gauḍiya* magazine. Recognizing his literary talent and knowledge of scriptures, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī awarded him the title *Pratna Vidyālaṅkāra* ("decorated with traditional knowledge"). Praṇavānanda Brahmacārī edited many books published by his spiritual master, including *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata, Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā,* and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta.* His service allowed him close and regular association with Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī for a number



of years. Praṇavānanda Brahmacārī was known for his diligent note-taking, and in later years wrote many articles from the notes he had taken during his spiritual master's lectures.

From 1941 to 1947, Praṇavānanda Brahmacārī spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout Bengal and other parts of India. In 1947 he accepted *sannyāsa,* the renounced order of life, and received the name Bhakti Pramod Purī Goswami.

In 1954 the royal family of Burdwan (Bengal) gave the temple of Ananta Vāsudeva (a form of Kṛṣṇa) in Kalna to Purī Mahārāja, who installed his own Deities, Rādhā-Gopīnātha, alongside Ananta Vāsudeva. Purī Mahārāja was well known among his godbrothers for his dedication and expertise in Deity worship and would often be called upon to install Deities in his godbrothers' temples.

Purī Mahārāja took seriously Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī's instruction that he never "give up the service of the pen." For most of his life he wrote, edited, and published Kṛṣṇa conscious literature. His disciples have published more than a dozen of his books (written in Bengali), two of which have been translated into English.

Purī Mahārāja opened temples in Māyāpur, Calcutta, Medinipur (Bengal), and Puri. He was given an old temple of Dauji (Lord Balarāma) in Vṛndāvana. His institution is known as Śrī Gopīnāth Gauḍīya Maṭh. In recent years, branches have opened in Holland, Panama, Costa Rica, and the United States.

Purī Mahārāja visited His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda shortly before Śrīla Prabhupāda's passing in 1977. When Prabhupāda asked Purī Mahārāja to sing, he sang *Jaya Rādhe, Jaya Kṛṣṇa, Jaya Vṛndāvana* for Prabhupāda's pleasure. Puri Mahārāja greatly appreciated Śrīla Prabhupāda service. "His preaching in the West is simply amazing," he once said. When he saw a photo of the Deities at ISKCON's Los Angeles temple, in great emotion he said, "How happy Śrīla Prabhupāda [Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī] must be!"

In 1998 the king of Orissa attended Śrīla Purī Mahārāja's Vyāsa Pūjā (appearance-day celebrations), commemorating Mahārāja's one-hundredth birthday. India's prime minister, Sri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, sent a letter of praise and congratulations.

Śrīla Purī Mahārāja dedicated his life to Lord Kṛṣṇa's service. He passed away in the holy land of Jagannātha Purī, surrounded by devotees chanting the holy names of the Lord. His purified body was placed in *samādhi* (entombed) in Śrīdhām Māyāpur.

The Light Of the Gītā

A Summary of the Bhagavad-gītā—PART 1

by Kālakaṇṭha Dāsa
Illustration by Philip Malpass

BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ means "the song [*gītā*] of God [*Bhagavān*]." Readers the world over revere the *Bhagavad-gītā* as the most important book of the Vedic literature—the vast body of Sanskrit texts including and referring to the *Vedas*. The *Bhagavad-gītā* is itself but one short chapter of the *Mahābhārata*, a book so lengthy that Guiness calls it the world's longest. Yet in its short seven hundred verses, *Bhagavad-gītā* distills the wisdom of all the *Vedas*.

To understand *Bhagavad-gītā* in context, consider these prior incidents from the *Mahābhārata*. Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Pāṇḍu were brothers, princes who were heirs to the throne. Dhṛtarāṣṭra was born blind, and so the kingdom went to the younger Pāṇḍu. Pāṇḍu sired five sons (known as the Pāṇḍavas), including the incomparable warrior Arjuna. Dhṛtarāṣṭra had one hundred sons, headed by the ambitious and evil Duryodhana. Pāṇḍu died, and Dhṛtarāṣṭra accepted

the throne as a caretaker for the young Pāṇḍavas. But Dhṛtarāṣṭra's affection for his sons clouded his judgement, leading him to acquiesce to Duryodhana's sinister attempts to kill or vanquish the Pāṇḍavas. These attempts failed but ultimately led to a vast war involving virtually all the major kingdoms of the earth. The battle between cousins took place on the plain of Kurukṣetra, north of present-day Delhi.

Kālakaṇṭha Dāsa writes, runs a small business, and directs the Māyāpur Foundation U.S.A. He and his wife, both disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda, live with their two daughters in Gainesville, Florida.

This summary, along with Kālakaṇṭha Dāsa's 700-verse poetic rendering of the Gītā, *will be published this fall by Torchlight Publishing. Phone: 1-888-TORCHLT (1-888-867-2458); www.torchlight.com.*

CHAPTER 1: Arjuna Gives Up

THE *BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ* picks up the story with Dhṛtarāṣṭra's inquiring about the battle from his secretary, Sañjaya. Through a special boon from the sage Vyāsadeva, Sañjaya could see within himself all details of the battle. His vision includes Arjuna's hour-long conversation with Lord Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna's charioteer, just before the war was to begin.

How has Lord Kṛṣṇa, Himself a mighty king, assumed the menial duties of a charioteer? Before the battle, when both sides sought alliances, Kṛṣṇa offered to send His vast armies to fight for one side while serving personally in a non-combat role on the other. Duryodhana was delighted to have Kṛṣṇa's armies, and Arjuna was equally pleased to have his dear friend Kṛṣṇa with him on his chariot.

Sañjaya begins his narration of the battlefield scene by revealing Duryodhana's characteristic diplomacy and pride. After offering nominal praise to his opponents, Duryodhana loudly proclaims the superiority of his forces, the Kurus. The highly respected Bhīṣma—the grand-uncle of both the Kurus and the Pāṇḍavas—leads Duryodhana's army. But when the two sides raise threatening crashes of drums and conchshell blasts, it is Duryodhana's side that feels intimidated.

Arjuna is full of confidence, with the emblem of the heroic monkey warrior Hanumān on his chariot flag. Arjuna asks Lord Kṛṣṇa to drive him between the two armies so he can study his opponents. When Arjuna fully realizes that the battle will result in the deaths of so many dear relatives, he suddenly loses his resolve to fight. In shock, he presents Lord Kṛṣṇa with many good reasons for why he has decided to walk away from the battle.

CHAPTER 2: Reincarnation, Duty, and Yoga

KṚṢṆA QUICKLY REJECTS Arjuna's decision to refrain from battle. Arjuna admits he is confused and asks for instruction. In the remaining verses of this chapter, some of the most well known in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* Lord Kṛṣṇa presents three reasons for Arjuna to change his mind:

1. The eternal soul, distinct from the temporary body, reincarnates through various lifetimes. (verses 11–30)
2. As a warrior, Arjuna has a duty to fight. (31–38)
3. Arjuna's reasons for not fighting, although having some basis in Vedic scripture, miss the higher purpose of the *Vedas*—specifically, to transcend material circumstance through yoga. (39–53)

After Arjuna asks for clarification in verse 54, Lord Kṛṣṇa concludes the chapter with a further explanation of yoga and transcendence.

The concept of yoga, introduced in this chapter, reappears throughout the rest of the *Bhagavad-gītā.* Yoga is much more than the hatha-yoga exercises familiar in the West. Yoga, the root of the word *yoke,* means "to link" with God. In this chapter Lord Kṛṣṇa presents the basics of yoga: control of the mind, control of the senses, and pursuit of happiness higher than what can be found through the mind and senses. In later chapters Kṛṣṇa details various yoga paths.

We are also introduced in this chapter (verse 45) to the three modes of nature. These divisions or qualities of matter—goodness, passion, and ignorance—constitute one of Lord Kṛṣṇa's most vivid teachings. As a painter mixes blue, red, and yellow to create the endless spectrum of colors, so nature combines goodness, passion, and ignorance to influence and create distinct qualities in everyone and everything. Later chapters describe the effects of the modes on aspects of life including food, work, education and worship. Through yoga one clears away the influences of the modes.

In both Chapters One and Two we find references to "heaven," which refers not to the spiritual kingdom of God but to higher material planets, occupied by powerful *devas,* or demigods. Since the *devas* enjoy long life and extensive pleasures, the *Vedas* offer interested humans various means to attain their heavenly worlds. Here in Chapter Two, for the first of many times in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* Lord Kṛṣṇa rejects such motivated and polytheistic worship as inferior and mundane.

"Never was there a time when I did not exist, nor you, nor all these kings; nor in the future shall any of us cease to be." (2.12)

"What is night for all beings is the time of awakening for the self-controlled; and the time of awakening for all beings is night for the introspective sage." (2.69)

"Work done as a sacrifice for Viṣṇu has to be performed; otherwise work causes bondage in this material world. Therefore, O son of Kuntī, perform your prescribed duties for His satisfaction, and in that way you will always remain free from bondage." (3.9)

"The spirit soul bewildered by the influence of false ego thinks himself the doer of activities that are in actuality carried out by the three modes of material nature." (3.27)

CHAPTER 3: Karma-Yoga—The Yoga of Action

KARMA REFERS TO moral action and reaction. According to the law of karma, whatever actions one performs bring reactions. Good karma manifests as, for example, wealth, power, and prestige, while bad karma may appear as debt, disease, and vulnerability. Since the soul is eternal, as explained in Chapter Two, it carries karmic reactions from one life to the next. Karma entangles the soul in material activities and ignorance of its true identity.

Arjuna begins this chapter by asking how he could possibly fight for his own selfish purposes yet link with God and free himself from karma. Lord Kṛṣṇa directs Arjuna to fight, but without attachment. If Arjuna simply sits down and renounces the fight, he will still be subject to his karma. But if he does his duty, not for his own sake but for God's pleasure, he will be practicing karma-yoga.

Work in karma-yoga is free from any sinful reaction, even if such work means fighting in the upcoming war. To further explain karma-yoga, Lord Kṛṣṇa points out that God has created both man and the *devas*. Man relates to the *devas* through duty and sacrifice. Although unencumbered by any duty, to set a good example Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself performs prescribed duties. To encourage Arjuna to do his duty, Kṛṣṇa cites the example of the ancient king Janaka, an emblem of duty and sacrifice.

Neglect of duty, Lord Kṛṣṇa warns, leads to chaos. Those who understand the soul and karma generally work to educate others. Kṛṣṇa directs the enlightened to teach where possible but not to disturb those who have no interest. At the same time, Kṛṣṇa emphasizes that everyone's duty is unique. Regardless of what one's duty may be, one must perform it without attachment.

At the chapter's end, Arjuna asks what drives one to sinful, karma-producing actions, even against one's will. In reply, Lord Kṛṣṇa elaborates on the yogic principles of sense control introduced in Chapter Two.

In this chapter, as in other places in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* Lord Kṛṣṇa refers to God in the third person. This in no way compromises Lord Kṛṣṇa's many conclusive statements about His own divinity. For instance, if the prime minister discusses the powers of the prime minister, he is talking about himself, but indirectly. Similarly, Lord Kṛṣṇa speaks general theology to Arjuna. When Arjuna is ready for full enlightenment, he will know that the Supreme is Lord Kṛṣṇa, as we shall see in later chapters.

"Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized souls can impart knowledge unto you because they have seen the truth." (4.34)

CHAPTER 4: Finding a Guru

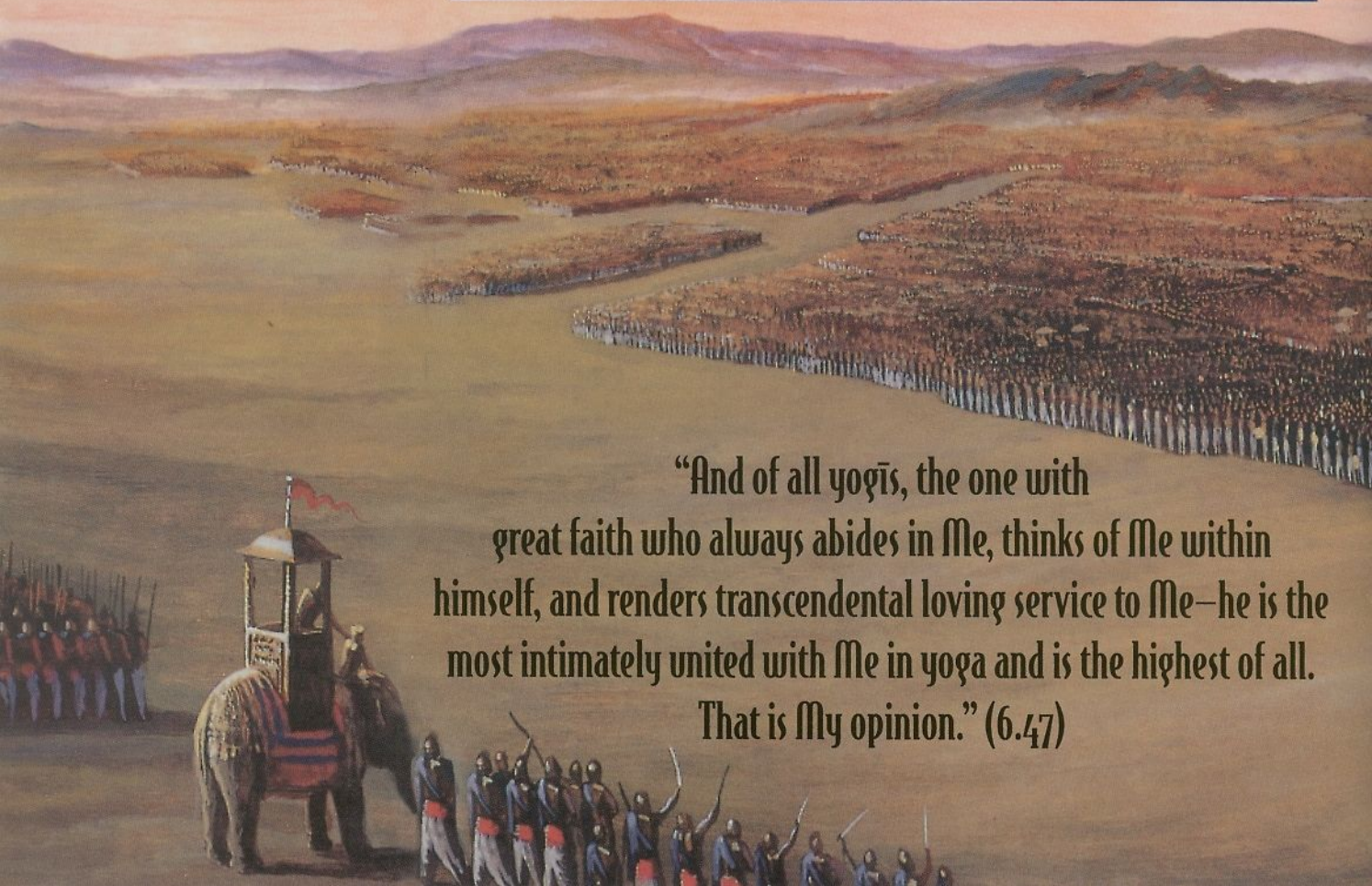
HAVING URGED Arjuna to conquer lust, the foe of learning, Lord Kṛṣṇa now reveals how to acquire spiritual knowledge: one must receive it through disciplic succession, a chain of gurus and disciples. Lord Kṛṣṇa inaugurated the disciplic succession at the inception of the universe. Although time has broken the chain, Lord Kṛṣṇa pledges to revive it with fresh, though unchanged, instructions.

Here for the first time in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* Lord Kṛṣṇa clearly distinguishes Himself from ordinary souls by saying that while He remembers past appearances, Arjuna has forgotten them. And unlike ordinary souls, karma does not impose birth and death on Lord Kṛṣṇa; He appears for His own reasons.

Lord Kṛṣṇa then says that materialists disregard Him and worship demigods. He says that He reciprocates with everyone according to their surrender, and that to accommodate all types of people, He creates four social divisions. Our qualities and actions reveal to which division we each belong. Lord Kṛṣṇa says that knowing these truths about Him will lead Arjuna to knowledge, as it has for past saints.

Lord Kṛṣṇa next differentiates between actions for sense gratification, which produce karma, and transcendental actions, which don't. Transcendentalists act to please God, not for sense gratification, and the Lord accepts such offerings of work. The transcendentalist thus enjoys a fully spiritualized life on earth and then returns to the kingdom of God.

In verses 25 through 33 Lord Kṛṣṇa describes the ways various yogīs approach the Absolute Truth. In verse 34 He advises Arjuna to find an expert guru who understands these paths and has himself realized their conclusion. Completing the chapter, Lord Kṛṣṇa describes the beauty and power of transcendental knowledge and exhorts Arjuna to fight on and slay his ignorance.



"And of all yogīs, the one with great faith who always abides in Me, thinks of Me within himself, and renders transcendental loving service to Me—he is the most intimately united with Me in yoga and is the highest of all. That is My opinion." (6.47)

"A person in full consciousness of Me, knowing Me to be the ultimate beneficiary of all sacrifices and austerities, the Supreme Lord of all planets and demigods, and the benefactor and well-wisher of all living entities, attains peace from the pangs of material miseries." (5.29)

CHAPTER 5: Acting in Consciousness of Lord Kṛṣṇa

KṚṢṆA'S STATEMENTS have again confused Arjuna. At the end of Chapter 4 Lord Kṛṣṇa advocates knowledge and renunciation, then again urges Arjuna to fight. Arjuna requests clear direction: Should he renounce everything, or should he fight on behalf of God?

Kṛṣṇa replies that both methods are acceptable, but acting for Him is better. He explains karma-yoga in even more detail. By contrasting the self-serving work of a materialist and the work of a devotee, Lord Kṛṣṇa demonstrates how sacrificing one's work for God leads to sense control and freedom from karma.

Action in consciousness of Lord Kṛṣṇa leads to enlightenment and happiness within the "city of nine gates"—the physical body, with its nine openings. Situated in realization, the master of the city sees the modes of nature at work within himself and others around him.

An enlightened soul sees all others equally, regardless of their position. Such a person avoids all kinds of problems by subduing the senses, and thus relishes a higher happiness coming from within. This realization, the perfection of mysticism, leads to compassion for others still controlled by their senses.

In summary, Lord Kṛṣṇa declares Himself to be the supreme proprietor, the supreme beneficiary of all work, and the supreme friend of every living being. He promises peace for anyone who knows Him in this way.

CHAPTER 6: Meditation and Mystic Yoga

THROUGHOUT THE *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa presents a variety of options to address Arjuna's perplexity. In this chapter Lord Kṛṣṇa elaborates on the processes of meditation and mystic yoga He introduced briefly at the end of Chapter 5. The successful yogī enjoys a profound equilibrium of mind and utter detachment from any external circumstance. To achieve this end, the mystic yogī must live in the forest, be celibate, reduce eating and sleeping to the bare minimum, and meditate constantly. In such meditation the yogī repeatedly drags the wandering mind back to the task at hand.

After hearing this description, Arjuna objects that the mind is too difficult to control. Even after Lord Kṛṣṇa reassures him, Arjuna still doubts his ability to succeed. Kṛṣṇa then explains that a yogī benefits by simply trying. Lord Kṛṣṇa concludes His account of this difficult yoga system by declaring that one who worships Him faithfully is, in fact, the best of all yogīs.

CHAPTER 7:
Absolute Knowledge

HAVING IDENTIFIED the best yogī as one who serves and thinks of Him, Lord Kṛṣṇa now explains how to attain such constant remembrance. During this explanation, Lord Kṛṣṇa contrasts matter and spirit, evil and piety, and folly and wisdom. Matter, Lord Kṛṣṇa's inferior energy, consists of eight basic elements: earth, water, air, fire, ether, mind, intelligence, and false ego. Ether refers to space. False ego describes more than pride; it is the spiritual soul's misidentification with the material body. Matter influences the conditioned soul as the three modes of nature (goodness, passion, and ignorance). Spirit, Lord Kṛṣṇa's superior energy, consists of living beings, struggling hard with the elements and modes of material nature.

Having introduced Himself as the origin of both matter and spirit, Lord Kṛṣṇa describes metaphorically how one can see Him in matter. He then explains how one can directly perceive Him through voluntary, loving submission.

Lord Kṛṣṇa next describes four kinds of pious people who surrender to Him and four kinds of evil persons who do not. Among those who surrender, He expresses special appreciation for those who do so out of wisdom. Intelligent persons, fortified with past pious deeds, take shelter of Lord Kṛṣṇa and transcend birth and death. On the other hand, Lord Kṛṣṇa says, fools worship *devas* for material gain—a popular custom among those who nominally follow the *Vedas*. Fools also consider that Lord Kṛṣṇa has come from Brahman, a formless, impersonal energy. Such persons never know Lord Kṛṣṇa, because for them He remains covered.

"O conqueror of wealth, there is no truth superior to Me. Everything rests upon Me, as pearls are strung on a thread." (7.7)

CHAPTER 8: Attaining the

THIS CHAPTER OPENS with several questions and answers that comprise most of the basic subjects of the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

(1) What is Brahman?

Lord Kṛṣṇa defines Brahman as the deathless soul. In the philosophy of Vaiṣṇavism, or devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the individual soul is pure spirit, in quality one with Kṛṣṇa. In quantity, however, the individual is vastly inferior to Kṛṣṇa. A drop of ocean water may possess the qualities of water present throughout the entire the ocean, but a drop cannot sustain a boat. In the same way, individual souls are both one with and different from Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Parabrahman, or Supreme Brahman.

(2) What is the material world?

Lord Kṛṣṇa defines material crea-

"Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits this body, O son of Kuntī, that state he will attain without fail." (8.6)

Supreme

tion as the ever-changing physical nature. By contrast, the spiritual nature, or Brahman, never changes.

(3) What is the self?

Lord Kṛṣṇa refers to the self as the eternal nature of the soul. By nature, the soul serves; either he serves the physical creation and remains entangled, or he serves the spiritual creation and goes there. The entity who executes this free will is the self.

(4) What is karma?

Karma is the interaction of the changeless soul with the ever-mutating physical creation. The soul creates that interaction by choosing to serve matter, resulting in various physical bodies encapsulating the spiritual soul.

(5) Who are the *devas*?

Devas, highly elevated living beings, assist in the management of the physical creation. Under Lord Kṛṣṇa's direction, they manipulate the weather, the planets, and everything else, including the mechanics of karma. They are components of Lord Kṛṣṇa's vast universal form, as He reveals to Arjuna in Chapter Eleven.

Lord Kṛṣṇa describes the life of Brahmā, a chief *deva* and the first created being in the universe. At the dawn of Brahmā's vast daytime, the hosts of individual souls enter material bodies according to their karma. In his nighttime, the souls return to an unmanifest condition. Eventually even Brahmā dies. Lord Kṛṣṇa then declares His own abode to be above such painful cycles of birth and death, creation and devastation.

(6) Who is the Lord of sacrifice?

The Lord or beneficiary of sacrifice is Lord Kṛṣṇa, who dwells in the heart of every embodied being as the Supersoul.

(7) How can a devotee know Lord Kṛṣṇa at the time of death?

Among all of Arjuna's questions, Kṛṣṇa speaks most about this, the destination of the soul. The state of mind one has at death, Kṛṣṇa says, determines what kind of body one will attain in the next lifetime. Kṛṣṇa then tells Arjuna how to think of Him and thus go to Him at death. Kṛṣṇa goes on to discuss the mechanical methods of yoga, which help improve the soul's destination. But Kṛṣṇa assures Arjuna that a devotee who thinks of Him doesn't have to worry about such mechanical considerations. In conclusion, Lord Kṛṣṇa declares that simply by being a *bhakta,* or devotee, one obtains the results of every kind of meritorious action.

CHAPTER 9: God's Personality

AS THE *BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ* progresses, Lord Kṛṣṇa reveals His mind more intimately to Arjuna. In this chapter, after a formal description of His relationship with the material creation, Lord Kṛṣṇa discloses His loving relationship with His devotees. Further explaining His divinity, Kṛṣṇa states that He creates and pervades everything yet remains a distinct and detached individual. Because conditioned souls stay engrossed in material energy, they cannot understand Kṛṣṇa, even if they see Him. As a result, their plans fail. On the other hand, by knowing Kṛṣṇa, the liberated souls become enlightened.

Lord Kṛṣṇa then lists several ways to see Him, as He did in Chapter Seven. He again brings up the theme of misdirected worship. Pursuing extreme material happiness, some Vedic followers worship *devas.* Although after much effort such worshipers may attain heavenly bliss, they soon return to ordinary birth and death.

Lord Kṛṣṇa closes the chapter with details of how a tiny individual soul enters a loving exchange with Him. Being a person, Lord Kṛṣṇa enjoys a simple, affectionate offering of water, fruit, or flowers. He declares Himself impartial to everyone, yet He admits reciprocating in friendship with His devotee by relieving all the devotee's karma at death.

What Exactl

Tradition supports a broader definition of the word

by Satyarāja Dāsa

WALK INTO ANY Hare Kṛṣṇa temple and you're bound to hear the words *Veda* and *Vedic* repeatedly. Devotees refer to "Vedic art," "Vedic scriptures," "Vedic culture," "Vedic dress"—Vedic this and Vedic that. They use words related to *Veda* as often as materialists use the words *sex* and *money.*

Just what does *Vedic* mean? And where does "the *Veda*" come from?

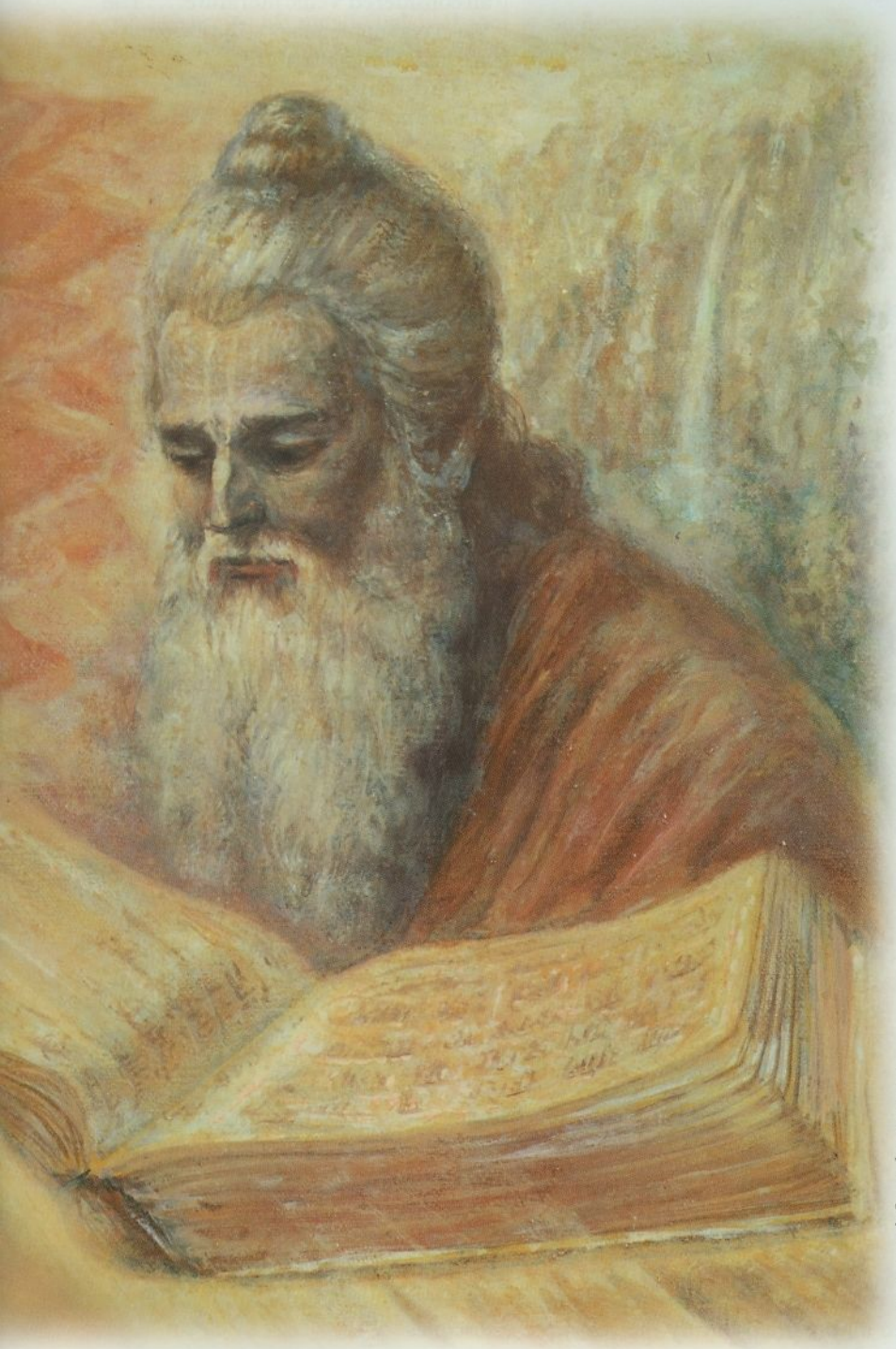
The word *Veda* can be traced to the Sanskrit root *vid,* which means "to know" or "knowledge." It is related to the words "wit" and "wisdom" from the German; "idea" (originally *widea*) from the Greek; and "video" from the Latin. (One who knows, sees the truth; hence: video.)

So *Veda* refers to any abiding knowledge. In that sense, all sacred texts are Vedic. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "The word *Veda* means 'book of knowledge.' There are many books of knowledge, which vary according to the country, population, environment, etc. In India, the books of knowledge are referred to as the *Vedas.* In the West, they are called the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Muslims accept the Koran. What is the purpose for all of these books of knowledge? They are to train us to understand our position as pure soul." (*Beyond Birth and Death,* p. 7)

These are among the broadest definitions of *Veda.* In a more narrow sense—and the one with which most scholars are familiar—*Veda* refers to the four *saṁhitās* (holy books) compiled in India by Vyāsadeva, an

y Is "Vedic"?

than is generally used in the academic world.



Detail from a painting by Prāśānta Dāsa

incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, some five thousand years ago. These books have an oral tradition that dates much further back. In fact, the texts themselves say that the knowledge contained in them emanated directly from the body of the Lord. As *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.15) puts it, "The *Vedas* are directly manifested from the infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead."

The four *Saṁhitās* started out as one lengthy work, but then Vyāsadeva divided them into the *Ṛg Veda* (the *Veda* of sacred sounds), the *Sāma Veda* (the *Veda* of melodies), the *Yajur Veda* (the *Veda* of rituals), and the *Atharva Veda* (the *Veda* of incantations). These four books have their own corollary works, called *Brāhmaṇas* (treatises dealing with the technicalities of sacrifices) and *Āraṇyakas* (forest treatises for renunciants who go off into the wilderness to fulfill vows).

Also generally included in the Vedic canon are the 108 *Upaniṣads,* elaborate philosophical explanations of the four *Vedas.* The *Upaniṣads,* say the ancient texts themselves, were revealed to self-realized sages and are thus called *śruti,* or "that which is heard." This puts them in the same category as the four *Vedas* and their corollaries.

Yet throughout the Vedic literature are indications—affirmed by great sages—that other works, while

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The Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam *(*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*) is the pinnacle of Śrīla Vyāsadeva's writings. One of its verses says, "This* Bhāgavata Purāṇa *is as brilliant as the sun. . . . Persons who have lost their vision due to the dense darkness of ignorance in the age of Kali shall get light from this* Purāṇa."

Divisions of the Vedic Literature

ŚRUTI (revealed writings, or "that which is heard")

I. The four *Veda Saṁhitās:* *Ṛg, Sāma, Yajur,* and *Atharva*
II. *Brāhmaṇas*
III. *Āraṅyakas*
IV. *Upaniṣads* (more than 108 books)

SMṚTI (tradition, or "that which is remembered")

I. *Itihāsas*
Epics, such as the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*, which includes the *Bhagavad-gītā*

II. *Purāṇas* (histories)
- **a. Eighteen *Mahā-purāṇas*** ("Great *Purāṇas*")
  - **Six sāttvic *Purāṇas*** (for persons in goodness)
    Bhāgavata Purāṇa (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*), *Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Nāradīya Purāṇa, Garuḍa Purāṇa, Padma Purāṇa,* and *Varāha Purāṇa*
  - **Six rājasic *Purāṇas*** (for persons in passion)
    Matsya Purāṇa, Kūrma Purāṇa, Liṅga Purāṇa, Śiva Purāṇa, Skanda Purāṇa, and *Agni Purāṇa*
  - **Six tāmasic *Purāṇas*** (for persons in ignorance)
    Brahma Purāṇa, Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa, Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa, Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa, Bhaviṣya Purāṇa, and *Vāmana Purāṇa*
- **b. Eighteen *Upapurāṇas*** (lesser)
- **c. Numerous *Sthala Purāṇas*** (regional)

III. *Sūtras* (codes)
Śrauta-sūtra, Gṛha-sūtra, Kalpa-sūtra, Dharma-sūtra, Śulva-sūtra, Vedānta-sūtra

IV. *Vedāṅgas* (auxiliary sciences)
Śikṣa, Chandas, Vyākāraṇa, Nirukta, Jyotiśa, Kalpa

V. *Upavedas* (sciences indirectly related to Vedic study)
Āyur-veda, Gāṇḍharva-veda, Dhanur-veda, Sthāpatya-veda

VI. Writings and commentaries of the great *ācāryas* throughout history

not Vedic in the narrowest sense, can also be included within the vast gamut of traditional Vedic knowledge. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (7.1.4), for example, describes the *Purāṇas* and *Itihāsas,* which I'll define later, as "the fifth *Veda.*" And the *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (2.4.10) informs us, "The *Ṛg Veda,* the *Yajur Veda,* the *Sāma Veda,* the *Atharva Veda,* and histories such as the *Mahābhārata* and the *Purāṇas* are all breathed out by the Absolute Truth. Just as one's breath comes easily, these arise from the Supreme Brahman without any effort on His part."

The great thirteenth-century Vaiṣṇava teacher Madhvācārya affirms that much of the traditional literature of India can be considered part of the *Veda.* In his *Vedānta-sūtra* (2.1.6) commentary, he writes: "The *Ṛg Veda,* the *Yajur Veda,* the *Sāma Veda,* the *Atharva Veda,* the *Mahābhārata,* the *Pañcarātra,* and the original *Rāmāyaṇa* are all considered Vedic literature.... The Vaiṣṇava supplements—the *Purāṇas*—are also Vedic literature."

The writings coming after the *Upaniṣads* and the four *Vedas* are known as *smṛti* ("that which is remembered," as opposed to the Vedic *śruti*). They include the *Itihāsas* (epics) and the *Purāṇas* (histories). The *Itihāsas* are the *Mahābhārata* (110,000 verses) and the *Rāmāyaṇa* (50,000+). There are eighteen main *Purāṇas* (including the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*), many *Upapurāṇas* (lesser *Purāṇas*), and numerous regional *Purāṇas,* some more authoritative than others.

Also included within the Vedic literature are the *Sūtras* (books of concise philosophical statements), the *Vedāṅgas* (auxiliary sciences connected with Vedic study), and the *Upavedas* (sciences not directly related to Vedic study). The *Sūtras* include the *Śrauta-sūtra,* the *Gṛha-sūtra,* the *Kalpa-sūtra,* the *Dharma-sūtra,* the *Śulva-sūtra,* and most important, the *Vedānta-sūtra.* The six *Vedāṅgas* are *Śikṣa* (phonetics), *Chandas* (meter), *Vyākāraṇa* (grammar), *Nirukta* (etymology), *Jyotiśa* (astronomy), and *Kalpa* (ritual). Among the *Upavedas* are *Āyur-veda* (holistic medicine), *Gāṇḍharva-veda* (music and dance), *Dhanur-veda* (warfare), and *Sthāpatya-veda* (architecture).

Tradition holds that any literature in pursuance of the Vedic version is just as important as the *Vedas* themselves. These include such books as *Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya, Hari-vaṁśa, Brahma-yāmala,* and hundreds of others. Finally we can add the many writings of self-realized *ācāryas* (teachers in disciplic succession), such as Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī's *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and the many books of the six Gosvāmīs, Lord Caitanya's chief disciples.

The King of Books

Because these other writings bring out the essence of the original *Veda,* they are, in a sense, more important than the original *Veda.* Take *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* for example. According to tradition, this profound revelation was originally given by God to Brahmā, the first created being, at the dawn of creation. Brahmā conveyed the essence of the knowledge to Nārada, and Nārada passed it on to Vyāsa, who, as previously mentioned, took the eternal wisdom of the *Veda* and divided it into four distinct sections.

What I did not mention, however, is that after this, Vyāsa summarized the Vedic knowledge into a huge volume of terse codes known as *Vedānta-sūtra.* But after doing so, He became despondent. He felt that in compiling the Vedic literature, he had neglected to truly focus on the Absolute Truth. His suspicion was confirmed by his spiritual master, Nārada, who told him that he had indeed overlooked the central point of reality and would be satisfied only if he were to directly describe the name, fame, form, and pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Heeding the advice of his guru, Vyāsa compiled *Śrīmad-Bhagavatam,* whose verses describe it as "the king of books," "the spotless *Purāṇa,*" and "the mature fruit of the Vedic tree of knowledge." It is also considered the natural commentary on the *Vedānta-sūtra.*

For most followers of the Vedic tradition, the "later" or "non-Vedic" texts are more "Vedic" than the *Vedas* themselves. Jīva Gosvāmī, whom the followers of Lord Caitanya consider the foremost of all Vedic philosophers, emphasizes this point in his *Tattva-sandarbha* (17.4), where he quotes the *Skanda Purāṇa* (*Prabhāsa-khaṇḍa* 2.93): "O *brāhmaṇas,* one who is fully conversant with the four *Vedas,* the six *Vedāṅgas,* and the *Upaniṣads,* but who has not also studied the *Itihāsas* or the *Purāṇas,* is not actually learned in Vedic knowledge." Why? Because, according to Jīva, the *Purāṇas* and *Itihāsas* are superior to the *Vedas:* "The superiority of the *Purāṇas* and *Itihāsas* is described in the following passage from the *Nārada Purāṇa,* where Lord Śiva is quoted as saying, 'O beautiful Pārvatī, I consider the *Purāṇas* and *Itihāsas* superior to the *Vedas,* for whatever truths are present in the *Vedas* are also explained in these ancient works. Of this there is no doubt.'" (16.11) Clearly, the Vaiṣṇava tradition considers all supplementary Vedic literature indispensable when studying the *Vedas.*

Most Comprehensive

The Vedic literature is the most comprehensive scriptural tradition known to man. It contains information on everything from medicine and farming to the time sequences on upper and lower planets; from techniques of yoga and meditation to household hints and recipes for tasty vegetarian dishes; from detailed explanations of governmental organization to masterful directions on building and decorating a temple or a residence. The verses in each of the thousands of Vedic texts conform to strict rules of poetry and meter. The *Vedas* contain drama, history, and complex philosophy, as well as simple lessons of etiquette. Military protocol, the use of musical instruments, biographies of great saints and sages of the past—these are but a few of the subjects one finds in the *Vedas.*

It is no wonder, then, that Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees use the terms *Veda* and *Vedic* as if the words were going out of style. By drawing on the vast Vedic heritage, today associated mainly with India, devotees conjure up a culture so advanced, so sophisticated, that it is still respected by scholars, politicians, religionists, swamis, yogīs, and anyone privy to its elaborate teachings. We still find people in India today supporting their points in a debate—religious or political—by citing Vedic evidence. ISKCON devotees cite Vedic evidence in that way too, and in many other ways as well. And why not? They are drawing on a tradition that for thousands of years has formed the foundation for billions of materially and spiritually progressive lives.

Satyarāja Dāsa is a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda and a regular contributor to Back to Godhead. *He has written several books on Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He and his wife live in New York City.*

Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śyāmasundara

The Silver Jubilee of the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir

Rāma Navamī (April 12) marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda's inauguration of the beautiful temple of Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma in Vṛndāvana. A grand festival will feature a procession through the streets of Vṛndāvana, a *mahā-abhiṣeka* (bathing) of the Deities, and an extraordinary feast.

Lord Brahmā said, "One who understands that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the Supreme Personality of Godhead . . . crosses beyond this world of birth and death."

Śrī Caitanya In the Vedas

The Śrī Caitanya Upaniṣad, *excerpted by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura from the* Atharva Veda

Translated by Kuśakratha Dāsa

In honor of Gaura Pūrṇimā (March 20), the anniversary of the appearance five hundred years ago of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, we present the following excerpt from the Atharva Veda, *one of the four original books of the Vedic literature. These texts reveal that in the present age Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the incarnation of God and the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra is the recommended mantra for progress in spiritual life.*

Text 1

atha pippalādaḥ samit-pāṇir bhagavantaṁ brahmāṇam upasanno bhagavan me śubhaṁ kim atra cakṣasveti.

Carrying firewood in his hands, Pippalāda humbly approached his father, Lord Brahmā, and asked: "O my Lord, please tell me how I may attain an auspicious life."

Text 2

sa hovāca, bhūya eva tapasā brahmacaryeṇa śaśvad ramasva mano vaśeti.

Lord Brahmā replied: "Be satisfied by remaining always celibate, and perform austerities. Carefully control the activities of the mind. In this way you will attain an auspicious condition of life."

Text 3

sa tathā bhūtvā bhūya enam upasadyāha—bhagavan kalau pāpāc channāḥ prajāḥ kathaṁ mucyerann iti

Pippalāda followed these instructions, and after having become pure in his own heart and mind, he again approached his father and asked: "O my Lord, please tell me how the sinful living entities in the Kali-yuga may be delivered."

Text 4

ko vā devatā ko vā mantro bhūhīti.

"Who should be the object of their worship, and what mantra should they chant in order to become delivered? Kindly inform me."

Text 5

sa hovāca. rahasyaṁ te vadiṣyāmi—jāhnavī-tīre nava-dvīpe golokākhye dhāmni govindo dvi-bhujo gauraḥ sarvātmā mahā-puruṣo mahātmā mahā-yogī tri-guṇātītaḥ sattva-rūpo bhaktiṁ loke kāsyatīti. tad ete ślokā bhavanti.

Lord Brahma replied: "Listen carefully, for I shall give you a confidential description of what will happen in the

Kali-yuga. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Govinda, the supreme enjoyer, whose form is transcendental, who is beyond the touch of the three modes of material nature, and who is the all-pervading Supersoul residing in the hearts of all living entities, will appear again in the Kali age. Appearing as the greatest devotee, the Supreme Personality of Godhead will assume a two-armed form of golden complexion in His abode of Goloka Vṛndāvana manifested on the bank of the Ganges at Navadvīpa. He will disseminate pure devotional service in the world. This incarnation of the Lord is described in the following verses."

Text 6

eko devaḥ sarva-rūpī mahātmā
gauro rakta-śyāmala-śveta-rūpaḥ
caitanyātmā sa vai caitanya-śaktir
bhaktākāro bhakti-do bhakti-vedyaḥ

The one Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the master of all transcendental potencies, and who may be known only by devotional service, appears in innumerable transcendental forms. He has appeared with red, black, and white complexions, and He shall also appear in the golden form of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He shall assume the role of the perfect devotee, and He shall teach the conditioned souls the path of pure devotional service.

Text 7

namo vedānta-vedyāya
kṛṣṇāya paramātmane
sarva-caitanya-rūpāya
caitanyāya namo namaḥ

I offer my respectful obeisances unto Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the all-pervading Personality of Godhead, who is understood by the study of Vedānta philosophy. He is the master of all transcendental potencies, and He appears as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Text 8

vedānta-vedyaṁ puruṣaṁ purāṇaṁ
caitanyātmānaṁ viśva-yoniṁ mahantam
tam eva viditvāti-mṛtyum eti
nānyaḥ panthā vidyate 'yanāya

One who understands that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is known by the study of Vedānta philosophy, who is the original cause of the universe, and who is the oldest, the original person, crosses beyond this world of birth and death. This is the proper understanding of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and aside from this there is no other way for one to achieve liberation.

Text 9

sva-nāma-mūla-mantreṇa sarvaṁ hlādayati vibhuḥ.

Appearing in this golden form, the all-powerful Supreme Lord will fill the entire universe with transcendental bliss by the chanting of His own holy names.

Text 10

dve śaktī parame tasya hlādinī saṁvid eva ca iti.

In this way the Supreme Lord manifests two of His transcendental potencies: His *hlādinī śakti* (the potency of transcendental bliss) and *saṁvit śakti* (the potency of transcendental knowledge).

Text 11

sa eva mūla-mantraṁ japati harir iti kṛṣṇa iti rāma iti.

The Supreme Lord will chant a mantra consisting of the names of Hari, Kṛṣṇa, and Rāma (the mahā-mantra: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare).

Text 12

harati hṛdaya-granthiṁ vāsanā-rūpam iti hariḥ. kṛṣiḥ smaraṇe tac ca ṇas tad-ubhaya-melanam iti kṛṣṇaḥ. ramayati sarvam iti rāma ānanda-rūpaḥ atra śloko bhavati.

These three names of the Supreme Lord (Hari, Kṛṣṇa, and Rāma) may be explained in the following way: (1) "Hari"

means "He who unties [*harati*] the knot of material desire in the hearts of the living entities"; (2) "Kṛṣṇa" is divided into the two syllables "Kṛṣ" and "ṇa." "Kṛṣ" means "He who attracts the minds of all living entities," and "ṇa" means "the supreme transcendental pleasure." These two syllables combine to become the name "Kṛṣṇa"; and (3) "Rāma" means "He who delights [*ramayati*] all living entities," and it also means "He who is full of transcendental bliss." The mahā-mantra consists of the repetition of these names of the Supreme Lord.

Text 13

mantro guhyaḥ paramo bhakti-vedyaḥ.

The mahā-mantra (Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare) is the best of all mantras. Although it is very difficult to understand the mahā-mantra, it may be understood when one engages in pure devotional service of the Supreme Lord.

Text 14

nāmāny aṣṭāv aṣṭa ca śobhanāni, tāni nityaṁ ye japanti dhīrās te vai māyām atitaranti nānyaḥ paramaṁ mantraṁ parama-rahasyaṁ nityam āvartayati.

Those who seriously desire to make progress in spiritual life continually chant these sixteen splendid names of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and in this way they cross beyond the bondage of continued material existence. The chanting of these holy names of the Lord is the greatest of all mantras, and it is the most confidential of all secrets.

Text 15

caitanya eva saṅkarṣaṇo vāsudevaḥ parameṣṭhī rudraḥ śakro bṛhaspatiḥ sarve devāḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni sthāvarāṇi carāṇi ca yat kiñcit sad-asat-kāraṇaṁ sarvam. tad atra ślokāḥ.

Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the Supreme Personality of Godhead who appears as Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa and Lord Vāsudeva. He is the original father of Brahmā, Śiva, Indra, Bṛhaspati, all the demigods, and all moving and nonmoving living entities. He is the original cause of all that is temporary and all that is eternal. Nothing exists separately from Him, and therefore He is everything. He is described in the following verses.

Text 16—18

yat kiñcid asad bhuṅkte
kṣaraṁ tat kāryam ucyate

sat kāraṇaṁ paraṁ jīvās
tad akṣaram itīritam

kṣarākṣarābhyāṁ paramaḥ
sa eva puruṣottamaḥ
caitanyākhyaṁ paraṁ tattvaṁ
sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam

This material world is temporary, whereas the individual living entities who try to enjoy matter are eternal and superior to it. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is superior to both the temporary material energy and the eternal living entities. Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu is this Supreme Person, the Absolute Truth, the original cause of all causes.

Text 19

ya enaṁ rasayati bhajati dhyāyati sa pāpmānaṁ tarati sa pūto bhavati, sa tattvaṁ jānāti, sa tarati śokam, gatis tasyāte nānyasyeti.

One who worships the Supreme Lord, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, with devotion and always remembers Him becomes free from all sins and completely pure. Easily understanding the truth about the Personality of Godhead and becoming free from all material lamentation, such a devotee attains the supreme goal of life, which is unattainable by those averse to the Supreme Lord, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, a great ācārya, *or spiritual teacher, was the father of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.*
Kuśakratha Dāsa, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, has translated more than 120 sacred books from Sanskrit and Bengali into English.

The Root of ANGER

A therapist draws on Lord Kṛṣṇa's teachings to help a child control his rage.

by Arcana-siddhī Devī Dāsī

THE HOSPITAL ROOM SMELLS strongly of antiseptic as I walk in. Chris sits on his bed, immersed in rapidly pushing buttons with his thumbs.

"Nintendo?" I ask nonchalantly, breaking his concentration.

"Play Station," he replies, continuing to madly push buttons.

I sit in a chair next to his bed, observing his strategy for blowing things up.

After a couple of minutes, Chris slams the game paddle to the floor.

"I hate this game," he snarls, with a few expletives thrown in.

Instinctively I reply, "Hmm, sounds like you're really angry."

My statement of the obvious sounds ludicrous to both of us. Chris ignores me. He covers his head with the bed sheet and mumbles to himself.

I feel uncomfortable and don't know what to say to draw him out. Chris is an eleven-year-old boy I've been working with in mental-health therapy for the past year. He has a history of explosive, raging outbursts. Recently he kicked a brick wall so hard he broke the femur in his right leg. Now he's confined to a hospital bed with pins in his leg.

I make another feeble attempt to connect to him.

"Anger is a powerful feeling. Looks like we need to explore new ways for you to control it, rather than it control you."

After enduring a few more minutes of silence, I decide to try a different approach.

" I brought you some cookies," I say with as much enthusiasm as I can muster.

At this, he peers out from under the sheet and asks, "What kind?"

Relieved to hear some response, I reply "Peanut butter."

He puts his hand out, and I place the cookies in it. Both he and the cookies disappear under the sheet. The muted sound of his munching fills the sterile room.

Losing Control

Since Chris and I began working on his anger, he has learned to identify things that trigger it. Getting teased at school makes him furious and inspired him to kick the brick wall. He has also learned to recognize that when

he loses control, his fists and teeth clench and he feels flushed. He has developed a repertoire of positive ways to deal with his anger: walking away, positive self-talk, running around the block, visualizing a peaceful place. Despite this arsenal of anger-management skills, he still fails to control his anger in real-life situations.

Because I'm a long-time student of *Bhagavad-gītā,* Chris's problem reminds me of the verse in which Lord Kṛṣṇa tells His friend and disciple Arjuna that anger comes from lust. People generally think of lust as sexual longing. But Lord Kṛṣṇa's definition of lust extends to any ungodly desire to gratify the senses.

Lord Kṛṣṇa further explains that although the senses require a certain amount of satisfaction, unless regulated they become like wild horses, forcing one to obey their whims. Craving the objects of their satisfaction, the senses take control of the mind and intelligence, leading to frustration and anger when their impossible demands go unmet. From this anger, Kṛṣṇa continues, delusion arises, and from delusion, bewilderment of memory. When memory is bewildered, human intelligence is lost, leaving one in a hell of irrational behavior.

Anger in Littleton

Modern society is full of people plagued with sensual addictions. When such people can't satisfy their urges, they become frustrated and anger takes control. As a result, we are currently witnessing unprecedented acts of violence throughout society. Even our middle-class suburban schools have been victimized by a rash of killings perpetrated by children from their own communities.

On April 20,1999, two students of Columbine High School in affluent Littleton, Colorado, opened fire on their fellow students, killing eleven and injuring many more. For the climax of their orchestrated massacre, the boys shot and killed themselves.

Like my client Chris, the Littleton boys had experienced peer rejection. One of them had graduated from an anger-management class. Still, rather than seek out ways to be accepted, they chose to retaliate with vengeance. They identified with hate groups and then planned a diabolical scheme to persecute those they imagined had smitten them.

This is a modern illustration of the *Gītā's* timeless words: a thwarted desire for adoration and distinction emotionally evolves from lust to anger, then to delusion, and finally to insanity.

Graduates of the study of the *Bhagavad-gītā* go on to the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.* The *Bhāgavatam* narrates several accounts of how anger bewildered the intelligence of even great personalities. Once Durvāsa Muni, a powerful yogī, approached the palace of Ambarīṣa Mahārāja, a saintly king and exalted devotee of the Lord. Ambarīṣa prepared a reception with sumptuous food for Durvāsa. As was the custom, before accepting his meal Durvāsa went to bathe in the river. While bathing, the mystic Durvāsa entered a yogic trance and stayed in the water for some time.

King Ambarīṣa had been observing a religious fast, and the proper time to break his fast was approaching. Not wanting to offend Durvāsa by accepting his own meal before feeding his guest, Ambarīṣa Mahārāja drank a little water—an action that simultaneously breaks and does not break one's fast.

Craving the objects of their satisfaction, the senses take control of the mind and intelligence, leading to frustration and anger when their impossible demands go unmet.

By his yogic abilities, Durvāsa came to know of this perceived transgression. Thinking the king's action disrespectful, Durvāsa became insulted, and to retaliate he went before Ambarīṣa with angry words. He then invoked a fiery demon meant to destroy the king. But Lord Kṛṣṇa protected His devotee Ambarīṣa and released His razor-sharp disc weapon towards Durvāsa. After fleeing for his life, Durvāsa came to his senses and realized how his pride and lust for adoration and distinction had provoked his needless wrath. Understanding the ramifications of his anger, Durvāsa Muni fell at the feet of Mahārāja Ambarīṣa and received forgiveness.

Anger As a Symptom

There are rare instances where anger is spiritually appropriate, provoked by injustices against the Lord and His devotees. Most anger, however, is a negative emotion manifested from frustrated attempts to enjoy sensually in the material world. Such anger must be checked and controlled. Teaching people anger-management skills can help. Chris sometimes successfully avoided confrontation by remembering to use them.

But as fever is a symptom of some disease in the body, anger is a symptom of ongoing material hankerings. Just as treating fever alone will not cure the disease, treating anger without understanding it to be a symptom of lust will not extinguish the unwanted behavior. To conquer anger, we must first ask how we shall conquer lust.

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* describes many persons who conquered lust and were unaffected by anger. Foremost among them is Prahlāda Mahārāja. At the age of five, Prahlāda, a self-realized devotee, had no interest in worldly gain—just the opposite of his lusty, atheistic father, Hiraṇyakaśipu. In time, the godless Hiraṇyakaśipu began to look upon his saintly son as an enemy and plotted to kill him.

Although harassed in various ways by his father, Prahlāda never became angry with him. The Lord, however, appeared as Nṛsiṁhadeva and killed Hiraṇyakaśipu. Afterwards, He offered a benediction to Prahlāda, who, being self-satisfied in love of God, asked only that his evil father be liberated from his sins.

To be free of any negative emotions towards a person who tries to kill you may seem impossible. Yet a pure soul sees things differently. Pure devotees of God know they are spiritual beings, separate from the material body, and they see others in the same way. They understand how karma forces everyone to act according to a particular conditioned nature. They have full faith that the Lord is orchestrating everything and that He will protect them. Self-realized souls such as Prahlāda are satisfied, so they don't need to exploit anything or anyone.

While this portrait of a pure soul may seem foreign, it is nevertheless our actual nature. Layers of dirt may cover gold, but when thoroughly cleansed the gold resumes its brilliance. Similarly, those who become cleansed of material desire again exhibit their original purity. Such purification is possible by engaging the demanding senses in serving the Lord. Without using the senses in God's service, trying to control them will end in frustration and failure.

Detail from a painting by Yaduraṇi Devi Dāsi

Unlike his atheistic father, Prahlāda is one of many great souls who conquered lust and were unaffected by anger.

Helping Chris

I realize that Chris's success hinges on his turning to God, Kṛṣṇa. Chris can now go in a direction that will elevate or degrade his consciousness. He can allow his anger to consume him and follow the teenage murderers of Columbine. Or he can follow in the footsteps of Prahlāda and Ambarīṣa.

Right now I can't imagine Chris sitting down to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra on beads. But I can introduce prayer to get him started.

When Chris finally emerges from under the sheets, I suggest a new tactic: praying to God for help with his anger. Together we formulate the prayer: "My dear Lord, please help me to stay in control of my anger. Help me to be calm and peaceful even when I'm being teased."

Chris repeats the prayer several times out loud and gives me an approving nod.

"Maybe this will help." he says with a new confidence.

"I'm sure it will," I respond, getting up to leave.

He waves enthusiastically.

"Come again," he says, "and bring more cookies!"

I make a mental note to bring cookies offered to Kṛṣṇa so Chris can be purified. I'd hate for him to be angry with me.

Arcana-siddhī Devī Dāsī was initiated by Śrīla Prabhupāda in 1976. She lives with her husband and son in Baltimore, Maryland, where she works as a family therapist.

GOD and the ABSOLUTE TRUTH

On reading Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, a graduate student of theology knew he had found something first-class.

by Ravīndra Svarūpa Dāsa

The following is an abridged lecture given last year at ISKCON's first center—26 Second Avenue in New York City. (Abridged by Nandi Mukhī Devī Dāsī.)

I WANT TO SPEAK tonight on a few sentences from Śrīla Prabhupāda's Introduction to the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.* But first I want to explain why these sentences are important to me. When I first ran across devotees, I was in my third year of graduate school in religious studies at Temple University. I was not in comparative religion or anything as down-to-earth as that. My field was theology and philosophy of religion. I was a snob.

On campus, I ran into devotees who were jumping up and down rather vigorously, chanting with *mṛdaṅga* and *karatālas.* The first thing I thought was *You'll never catch me doing that.*

A friend ended up dragging me to the temple. I didn't expect much on an intellectual level. Then I read the *Īśopaniṣad,* and this crudely printed book written in simple English caused an intellectual revolution. I realized I was in the presence of first-class theology. The

***I liked it when Śrīla Prabhupāda described Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, because I had many prejudicial ideas associated with the word* God.**

• • •

more I read, the more Kṛṣṇa consciousness and its theology seemed to me to be professional, while everything else I had come across was amateur.

One of the first things I read was Śrīla Prabhupāda's Introduction to the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.* In the first sentence Prabhupāda makes a distinction, and I have never found so clear a distinction on this point in anything I have ever read:

> The conception of God and the conception of Absolute Truth are not on the same level. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* hits on the target of the Absolute Truth. The conception of God indicates the controller, whereas the conception of the Absolute Truth indicates the *summum bonum,* or the ultimate source of all energies. There is no difference of opinion about the personal feature of God as the controller because a controller cannot be impersonal. . . . According to the *Bhagavad-gītā* any controller who has some specific extraordinary power is called *vibhūtimat sattva,* or controller empowered by the Lord. There are many *vibhūtimat sattvas,* controllers or gods, with various specific functions, but the Absolute Truth is one without a second. This *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* designates the Absolute Truth, or the *summum bonum,* as the *paraṁ satyam.*

What is Śrīla Prabhupāda talking about when he says that the conception of God and the conception of the Absolute Truth are not on the same level? I quickly understood that he's talking not about the beings designated by these ideas but about the ideas themselves. In philosophy we make a distinction between a term's connotation and its denotation. Take the terms "the morning star" and "the evening star"; they both denote the same thing, the planet Venus, but the connotation, the meaning, is different.

Śrīla Prabhupāda is saying that God and the Absolute Truth have different connotations. He makes this clear when he says that there are many different controllers or gods. In other words, Śrīla Prabhupāda is thinking of the Sanskrit word *īśvara,* which means "controller." In principle there can be many *īśvaras,* or gods. The conception of God doesn't have the same meaning as the conception of the Absolute Truth. There can be many controllers or gods, but the ultimate source of all energies is the Absolute Truth.

Here Śrīla Prabhupāda is thinking of the definition of Brahman (Absolute Truth) given in the *Vedānta-sūtra.* The *Vedānta-sūtra* says that Brahman is that from which everything emanates. It is that which maintains everything then re-absorbs it all, the ultimate source of all energies. There are many controllers or gods of very specific powers, but the Absolute Truth is one without a second.

Persons from a Person

In the second paragraph Śrīla Prabhupāda says that the Absolute Truth is the Supreme Person. Śrīla Prabhupāda presents the argument in this way: The Absolute Truth is the ultimate source of all energies, and the *vibhūtimat sattvas,* or persons empowered by the Lord, are the Absolute Truth's energies; consequently, the Absolute Truth, who created persons, must also be a person. If controller means person, then the controller of controllers must also be a person.

I liked it when Śrīla Prabhupāda described Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, because I had many prejudicial ideas associated with the word *God.* But I quickly realized that "Supreme Personality of Godhead" is a very precise term. "Godhead" traditionally is a term for the Absolute Truth, and Śrīla Prabhupāda says "Personality of Godhead" to denote that the Absolute Truth has a personal feature.

Although the idea of God and the idea of the Absolute Truth are different, it turns out the Absolute Truth includes this personal aspect we associate with *īśvara.* So what Śrīla Prabhupāda also does in these first two paragraphs is reject impersonalism. He says that the many controllers are *īśvaras* but that there is one *parameśvara;* the Absolute Truth is the Supreme Person.

Śrīla Prabhupāda packed all this information into two paragraphs. When I began to understand how much information was here, it amazed me that someone could cover so much ground in so few sentences.

In a Class by Himself

What does it mean to say that Kṛṣṇa is the Absolute Truth, the ultimate source of all energies? This idea is presented in the *Upaniṣads,* and Śrīla Prabhupāda often cited one verse in particular. *Nityo nityānāṁ cetanaś cetanānām eko bahunām yo vidadhāti kāmān:* There is one eternal (*nityaḥ*), conscious (*cetana*) being among many eternal, conscious beings. And the one is the supplier to the many of all their needs. In other words, the one is independent, and the many are dependent.

Let's think about what this means. We are *nityānām,* the many conscious souls, but among the many *nityānām* there is one *nityaḥ* who is singular. This refers to the Absolute Truth, who is in a class by Himself. If we put it together with what we read in the Introduction, the singular *nityaḥ* is the ultimate source of all energies, and the many *nityānām* are in the category of energy and are dependent.

To sustain ourselves we require supplies—so many pounds of food, so many cubic feet of air, so many gallons

of water. So where do these supplies come from? The *Vedas* say that there are cosmic controllers, *devas,* who are specialists in the supply department. Śrīla Prabhupāda says that just as a city has a water department, a gas department, an electric department, so the universe runs on the same principle.

Even on the mundane level, when you need groceries you go to the grocery store. When grocery store shelves go empty, what do the store managers do? They go to the food warehouse. Everybody has to go for replenishment and restocking. Same with the *devas.* They run out.

So let's follow the chain back. According to the *Vedas* ultimately you come to a unique being, Kṛṣṇa, the Absolute Truth, who supplies and supplies and supplies. Where does He go for replenishment? He doesn't. He doesn't run out, because He's the Absolute Truth, and His nature is described as *oṁ pūrṇam adaḥ pūrṇam idam.* The Invocation of the *Īśopaniṣad* describes a being who is *pūrṇam,* perfect and complete. He's so perfectly complete that if you take *pūrṇam* away from Him He's still *pūrṇam.* As Śrīla Prabhupāda says, the mathematics of the Absolute Truth is 1 - 1 = 1. Kṛṣṇa can give everything, and He's still got it; He's not diminished.

All There Is

Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He's the Absolute Truth, and the Absolute Truth is one without a second. But there is another sense of being one without a second, namely being all there is.

The theologian Paul Tillich said that God cannot be the Supreme Being among all beings because that would limit Him to being one among many. Therefore, he said, God is Being Itself. His argument is this: I'm a person. "Person" means I'm limited, I have definition. Here I end and the world begins. Therefore, if God is one thing among many things, how is He infinite? To resolve this dilemma, theologians say that God is Being Itself. But this is a false dilemma.

Let's look at this argument a minute. Because God is great, God can only be a cloud of gas? By the time you finish making God infinite and unlimited, He has no name, no form, no qualities, and no activities. In fact, He's a big zero. He's nothing, but with a capital N. Something is wrong with this process.

What Śrīla Prabhupāda teaches us is that God is actually unlimited—simultaneously form and formless, simultaneously the Supreme Being among all beings and Being Itself.

Now there's the Absolute Truth and not some crippled idea of luminescent gas! And all this is what we talk about when we talk about the Absolute Truth.

Ravīndra Svarūpa Dāsa, ISKCON's governing body commissioner for several states in the U.S., lives at the Philadelphia temple, where he joined ISKCON in 1971. He holds a Ph.D. in religion from Temple University.

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Referred to as "the ripe fruit of the tree of Vedic literature," *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the most complete and authoritative exposition of Vedic knowledge. Five thousand years ago the great sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa composed this *purāṇa,* or history, to explain the essence of spiritual knowledge. Here we present *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in serialized form, with the original Sanskrit text, transliteration, word meanings, translation, and purports by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

WORSHIPERS AND THEIR REWARDS

Lord Kapila, an incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, explains the results obtained by persons who perform worship without being Kṛṣṇa conscious.

CANTO 3: CHAPTER 32

2 स चापि भगवद्धर्मात्काममूढः पराङ्मुखः
यजते क्रतुभिर्देवान् पितॄंश्च श्रद्धयान्वितः

sa cāpi bhagavad-dharmāt
kāma-mūḍhaḥ parāṅ-mukhaḥ
yajate kratubhir devān
pitṝṁś ca śraddhayānvitaḥ

saḥ—he; *ca api*—moreover; *bhagavat-dharmāt*—from devotional service; *kāma-mūḍhaḥ*—infatuated by lust; *parāk-mukhaḥ*—having the face turned away; *yajate*—worships; *kratubhiḥ*—with sacrificial ceremonies; *devān*—the demigods; *pitṛn*—the forefathers; *ca*—and; *śraddhayā*—with faith; *anvitaḥ*—endowed.

Such persons [materialistic householders, who want to remain in the material world] are ever bereft of devotional service due to being too attached to sense gratification, and therefore, although they perform various kinds of sacrifices and take great vows to satisfy the demigods and forefathers, they are not interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, devotional service.

PURPORT: In *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.20) it is said that persons who worship demigods have lost their intelligence: *kāmais tais tair hṛta jñānāḥ.* They are much attracted to sense gratification, and therefore they worship the demigods. It is, of course, recommended in the Vedic scriptures that if one wants money, health, or education, then he should worship the various demigods. A materialistic person has manifold demands, and thus there are manifold demigods to satisfy his senses.

The *gṛhamedhīs,* who want to continue a prosperous materialistic way of life, generally worship the demigods or the forefathers by offering *piṇḍa,* or respectful oblations. Such persons are bereft of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and are not interested in devotional service to the Lord.

This kind of so-called pious and religious man is the result of impersonalism. ❶ The impersonalists maintain that the Supreme Absolute Truth has no form and that one can imagine any form he likes for his benefit and worship in that way. Therefore the *gṛhamedhīs* or materialistic men say that they can worship any form of a demigod as worship of the Supreme Lord. Especially amongst the Hindus, those who are meat-eaters prefer to worship goddess Kālī because it is prescribed that one can sacrifice a goat before that goddess. They maintain that whether one worships the goddess Kālī or the Supreme Personality of Godhead Viṣṇu or any demigod, the destination is the same.

This is first-class rascaldom, and such people are misled. But they prefer this philosophy. *Bhagavad-gītā* does not

(1) What do the impersonalists maintain?

accept such rascaldom, and it is clearly stated that such methods are meant for persons who have lost their intelligence. The same judgment is confirmed here, and the word *kāma-mūḍha,* meaning one who has lost his sense or is infatuated by the lust of attraction for sense gratification, is used. *Kāma-mūḍhas* are bereft of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and devotional service and are infatuated by a strong desire for sense gratification. The worshipers of demigods are condemned both in *Bhagavad-gītā* and in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.*

3 तच्छ्रद्धयाक्रान्तमतिः पितृदेवव्रतः पुमान्
गत्वा चान्द्रमसं लोकं सोमपाः पुनरेष्यति

tac-chraddhayākrānta-matiḥ
pitṛ-deva-vrataḥ pumān
gatvā cāndramasaṁ lokaṁ
soma-pāḥ punar eṣyati

tat—to the demigods and forefathers; *śraddhayā*—with reverence; *ākrānta*—overcome; *matiḥ*—his mind; *pitṛ*—to the forefathers; *deva*—to the demigods; *vrataḥ*—his vow; *pumān*—the person; *gatvā*—having gone; *cāndramasam* —to the moon; *lokam*—planet; *soma-pāḥ*—drinking soma juice; *punaḥ*—again; *eṣyati*—will return.

Such materialistic persons, attracted by sense gratification and devoted to the forefathers and demigods, can be elevated to the moon, where they drink an extract of the soma plant. They again return to this planet.

PURPORT: The moon is considered one of the planets of the heavenly kingdom. ❷ One can be promoted to this planet by executing different sacrifices recommended in the Vedic literature, such as pious activities in worshiping the demigods and forefathers with rigidity and vows. But one cannot remain there for a very long time. Life on the moon is said to last ten thousand years according to the calculation of the demigods. ❸ The demigods' time is calculated in such a way that one day (twelve hours) is equal to six months on this planet. It is not possible to reach the moon by any material vehicle like a sputnik, but persons who are attracted by material enjoyment can go to the moon by pious activities. In spite of being promoted to the moon, however, one has to come back to this earth again when the merits of his works in sacrifice are finished. This is also confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.21): *te taṁ bhuktvā svarga-lokaṁ viśālaṁ kṣīṇe puṇye martya-lokaṁ viśanti.*

(2) How can one reach the moon?
(3) How does the time of the demigods compare to ours?
(4) How can one avoid taking birth again in this world?
(5) What are the two kinds of dissolution?

4 यदा चाहीन्द्रशय्यायां शेतेऽनन्तासनो हरिः
तदा लोका लयं यान्ति त एते गृहमेधिनाम्

yadā cāhīndra-śayyāyāṁ
śete 'nantāsano hariḥ
tadā lokā layaṁ yānti
ta ete gṛha-medhinām

yadā—when; *ca*—and; *ahi-indra*—of the king of snakes; *śayyāyām*—on the bed; *śete*—lies; *ananta-āsanaḥ*—He whose seat is Ananta Śeṣa; *hariḥ*—Lord Hari; *tadā*—then; *lokāḥ*—the planets; *layam*—unto dissolution; *yānti*—go; *te ete*—those very; *gṛha-medhinām*—of the materialistic householders.

All the planets of the materialistic persons, including all the heavenly planets, such as the moon, are vanquished when the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, goes to His bed of serpents, which is known as Ananta Śeṣa.

PURPORT: The materially attached are very eager to promote themselves to the heavenly planets such as the moon. There are many heavenly planets to which they aspire just to achieve more and more material happiness by getting a long duration of life and the paraphernalia for sense enjoyment. But the attached persons do not know that even if one goes to the highest planet, Brahmaloka, destruction exists there also. In *Bhagavad-gītā* the Lord says that one can even go to the Brahmaloka, but still he will find the pangs of birth, death, disease, and old age. ❹ Only by approaching the Lord's abode, the Vaikuṇṭhaloka, does one not take birth again in this material world. The *gṛhamedhīs,* or materialistic persons, however, do not like to use this advantage. They would prefer to transmigrate perpetually from one body to another, or from one planet to another. They do not want the eternal, blissful life in knowledge in the kingdom of God.

❺ There are two kinds of dissolutions. One dissolution takes place at the end of the life of Brahmā. At that time all the planetary systems, including the heavenly systems, are dissolved in water and enter into the body of Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, who lies on the Garbhodaka Ocean on the bed of serpents, called Śeṣa. In the other dissolution, which occurs at the end of Brahmā's day, all the lower planetary systems are destroyed. When Lord Brahmā rises after his night, these lower planetary systems are again created.

The statement in *Bhagavad-gītā* that persons who worship the demigods have lost their intelligence is confirmed in this verse. These less intelligent persons do not know that even if they are promoted to the heavenly planets, at the time of dissolution they themselves, the demigods, and

all their planets will be annihilated. They have no information that eternal, blissful life can be attained.

5 ये स्वधर्मान्न दुह्यन्ति धीराः कामार्थहेतवे
निःसङ्गा न्यस्तकर्माणः प्रशान्ताः शुद्धचेतसः

ye sva-dharmān na duhyanti
dhīrāḥ kāmārtha-hetave
niḥsaṅgā nyasta-karmāṇaḥ
praśāntāḥ śuddha-cetasaḥ

ye—those who; *sva-dharmān*—their own occupational duties; *na*—do not; *duhyanti*—take advantage of; *dhīrāḥ*—intelligent; *kāma*—sense gratification; *artha*—economic development; *hetave*—for the sake of; *niḥsaṅgāḥ*—free from material attachment; *nyasta*—given up; *karmāṇaḥ*—fruitive activities; *praśāntāḥ*—satisfied; *śuddha-cetasaḥ*—of purified consciousness.

Those who are intelligent and are of purified consciousness are completely satisfied in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Freed from the modes of material nature, they do not act for sense gratification; rather, since they are situated in their own occupational duties, they act as one is expected to act.

PURPORT: The first-class example of this type of man is Arjuna. Arjuna was a *kṣatriya,* and his occupational duty was to fight. Generally, kings fight to extend their kingdoms, which they rule for sense gratification. But as far as Arjuna is concerned, he declined to fight for his own sense gratification. He said that although he could get a kingdom by fighting with his relatives, he did not want to fight with them. But when he was ordered by Kṛṣṇa and convinced by the teachings of *Bhagavad-gītā* that his duty was to satisfy Kṛṣṇa, then he fought. ❻ Thus he fought not for his sense gratification but for the satisfaction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Persons who work at their prescribed duties, not for sense gratification but for gratification of the Supreme Lord, are called *niḥsaṅga,* freed from the influence of the modes of material nature. *Nyasta-karmāṇaḥ* indicates that the results of their activities are given to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Such persons appear to be acting on the platform of their respective duties, but such activities are not performed for personal sense gratification; rather, they are performed for the Supreme Person. Such devotees are called *praśāntāḥ,* which means "completely satisfied." *Śuddha-cetasaḥ* means Kṛṣṇa conscious; their consciousness has become purified. ❼ In unpurified consciousness one thinks of himself as the Lord of the universe, but in purified consciousness one thinks himself the eternal servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Putting oneself in that position of eternal servitorship to the Supreme Lord and working for Him perpetually, one actually becomes completely satisfied. ❽ As long as one works for his personal sense gratification, he will always be full of anxiety. That is the difference between ordinary consciousness and Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

6 निवृत्तिधर्मनिरता निर्ममा निरहङ्कृताः
स्वधर्माप्तेन सत्त्वेन परिशुद्धेन चेतसा

nivṛtti-dharma-niratā
nirmamā nirahaṅkṛtāḥ
sva-dharmāptena sattvena
pariśuddhena cetasā

nivṛtti-dharma—in religious activities for detachment; *niratāḥ*—constantly engaged; *nirmamāḥ*—without a sense of proprietorship; *nirahaṅkṛtāḥ*—without false egoism; *sva-dharma*—by one's own occupational duties; *āptena*—executed; *sattvena*—by goodness; *pariśuddhena*—completely purified; *cetasā*—by consciousness.

By executing one's occupational duties, acting with detachment and without a sense of proprietorship or false egoism, one is posted in one's constitutional position by dint of complete purification of consciousness, and by thus executing so-called material duties he can easily enter into the kingdom of God.

PURPORT: Here the word *nivṛtti-dharma-niratāḥ* means "constantly engaging in executing religious activities for detachment." ❾ There are two kinds of religious performances. One is called *pravṛtti-dharma,* which means the religious activities performed by the *gṛhamedhīs* for elevation to higher planets or for economic prosperity, the final aim of which is sense gratification. Every one of us who has come to this material world has the sense of overlordship. This is called *pravṛtti.* But the opposite type of religious performance, which is called *nivṛtti,* is to act for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Engaged in devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one has no proprietorship claim, nor is one situated in the false egoism of thinking that he is God or the master. He always thinks himself the servant. That is the process of purifying consciousness. ❿ With pure consciousness only can one

(6) Why did Arjuna fight?
(7) How does one think in impure consciousness? In pure consciousness?
(8) What is the cause of anxiety?
(9) What are the two kinds of religious performances?
(10) What is required to enter the kingdom of God?

enter into the kingdom of God. Materialistic persons, in their elevated condition, can enter any one of the planets within this material world, but all are subjected to dissolution over and over again.

7 सूर्यद्वारेण ते यान्ति पुरुषं विश्वतोमुखम्
परावरेशं प्रकृतिमस्योत्पत्त्यन्तभावनम्

sūrya-dvāreṇa te yānti
puruṣaṁ viśvato-mukham
parāvareśaṁ prakṛtim
asyotpatty-anta-bhāvanam

sūrya-dvāreṇa—through the path of illumination; *te*—they; *yānti*—approach; *puruṣam*—the Personality of Godhead; *viśvataḥ-mukham*—whose face is turned everywhere; *para-avara-īśam*—the proprietor of the spiritual and material worlds; *prakṛtim*—the material cause; *asya*—of the world; *utpatti*—of manifestation; *anta*—of dissolution; *bhāvanam*—the cause.

Through the path of illumination, such liberated persons approach the complete Personality of Godhead, who is the proprietor of the material and spiritual worlds and is the supreme cause of their manifestation and dissolution.

PURPORT: The word *sūrya-dvāreṇa* means "by the illuminated path," or through the sun planet. The illuminated path is devotional service. It is advised in the *Vedas* not to pass through the darkness, but to pass through the sun planet. It is also recommended here that by traversing the illuminated path one can be freed from the contamination of the material modes of nature; by that path one can enter into the kingdom where the completely perfect Personality of Godhead resides.

The word *puruṣaṁ viśvato-mukham* means the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is all-perfect. All living entities other than the Supreme Personality of Godhead are very small, although they may be big by our calculation. Everyone is infinitesimal, and therefore in the *Vedas* the Supreme Lord is called the supreme eternal amongst all eternals. He is the proprietor of the material and spiritual worlds and the supreme cause of manifestation. Material nature is only the ingredient because actually the manifestation is caused by His energy. (11) The material energy is also His energy; just as the combination of father and mother is the cause of childbirth, so the combination of the material energy and the glance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the cause of the manifestation of the material world. The efficient cause, therefore, is not matter, but the Lord Himself.

(11) What is the cause of the manifestation of the material world?
(12) What happens at the end of Brahmā's life?
(13) Who are the three *puruṣa* incarnations of Kṛṣṇa?

8 द्विपरार्धावसाने यः प्रलयो ब्रह्मणस्तु ते
तावदध्यासते लोकं परस्य परचिन्तकाः

dvi-parārdhāvasāne yaḥ
pralayo brahmaṇas tu te
tāvad adhyāsate lokaṁ
parasya para-cintakāḥ

dvi-parārdha—two *parārdhas*; *avasāne*—at the end of; *yaḥ*—which; *pralayaḥ*—death; *brahmaṇaḥ*—of Lord Brahmā; *tu*—indeed; *te*—they; *tāvat*—so long; *adhyāsate*—dwell; *lokam*—on the planet; *parasya*—of the Supreme; *para-cintakāḥ*—thinking of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Worshipers of the Hiraṇyagarbha expansion of the Personality of Godhead remain within this material world until the end of two parārdhas, when Lord Brahmā also dies.

PURPORT: One dissolution is at the end of Brahmā's day, and one is at the end of Brahmā's life. (12) Brahmā dies at the end of two *parārdhas,* at which time the entire material universe is dissolved. Persons who are worshipers of Hiraṇyagarbha, the plenary expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, do not directly approach the Supreme Lord in Vaikuṇṭha. They remain within this universe on Satyaloka or other higher planets until the end of the life of Brahmā. Then, with Brahmā, they are elevated to the spiritual kingdom.

The words *parasya para-cintakāḥ* mean "always thinking of the Supreme Personality of Godhead," or being always Kṛṣṇa conscious. When we speak of Kṛṣṇa, this refers to the complete category of *viṣṇu-tattva.* (13) Kṛṣṇa includes the three *puruṣa* incarnations, namely Mahā-Viṣṇu, Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, and Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, as well as all the incarnations taken together. This is confirmed in the *Brahma-saṁhitā. Rāmādi-mūrtiṣu kalā-niyamena tiṣṭhan:* Lord Kṛṣṇa is perpetually situated with His many expansions, such as Rāma, Nṛsiṁha, Vāmana, Madhusūdana, Viṣṇu, and Nārāyaṇa. He exists with all His plenary portions and the portions of His plenary portions, and each of them is as good as the Supreme Lord. The words *parasya para-cintakāḥ* mean those who are fully Kṛṣṇa conscious. Such persons enter directly into the kingdom of God, the Vaikuṇṭha planets, or if they are worshipers of the plenary portion Garbodakaśayī Viṣṇu, they remain within this universe until its dissolution, and after that they enter.

(*continued in the next issue*)

"You Can Pronounce Kṛṣṇa in Any Way"

Here we continue an exchange between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and the poet Allen Ginsberg. It took place on May 12, 1969, in Columbus, Ohio.

Allen Ginsberg: Your Divine Grace, my original question was, Is the complicated ritual and the Sanskrit language—are they going to keep people from accepting what you're giving.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, no. We are translating, presenting everything in the English language. All our books are being published in English. Our magazine is in English.

Allen Ginsberg: But the question is, Is the mode of life that you are proposing adaptable to many, many, many people?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: To that I say that this Kṛṣṇa culture is not something that many, many people can immediately accept.

Allen Ginsberg: Yeah. But there is a thirst felt by many, many people for an alternative answer, for a better alternative system.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. So if people are actually thirsty—if they are actually thirsty—then they can adopt this system given by the Supreme Lord. What is the difficulty there? There is no difficulty. So many American boys and girls have already adopted it, and they are not feeling any difficulty. They are feeling relief. In what respect is chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa difficult? You are chanting.

Allen Ginsberg: Yes.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: It is all in Sanskrit. What difficulty are you feeling?

Allen Ginsberg: I don't feel too much difficulty, except aesthetically I do feel a difficulty. Yes, there is. The difficulty I feel is that there should be some flower of the American language to communicate in.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Therefore, we are seeking your help.

Allen Ginsberg: Hm. Well, I haven't found another way. I still just stay chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is also my view. I have come to America with this view: that America is at the summit of material civilization—they are not poverty-stricken, you see?—and yet they are seeking after something. Therefore, I have come to offer, "You take this. You'll be happy." That is my mission.

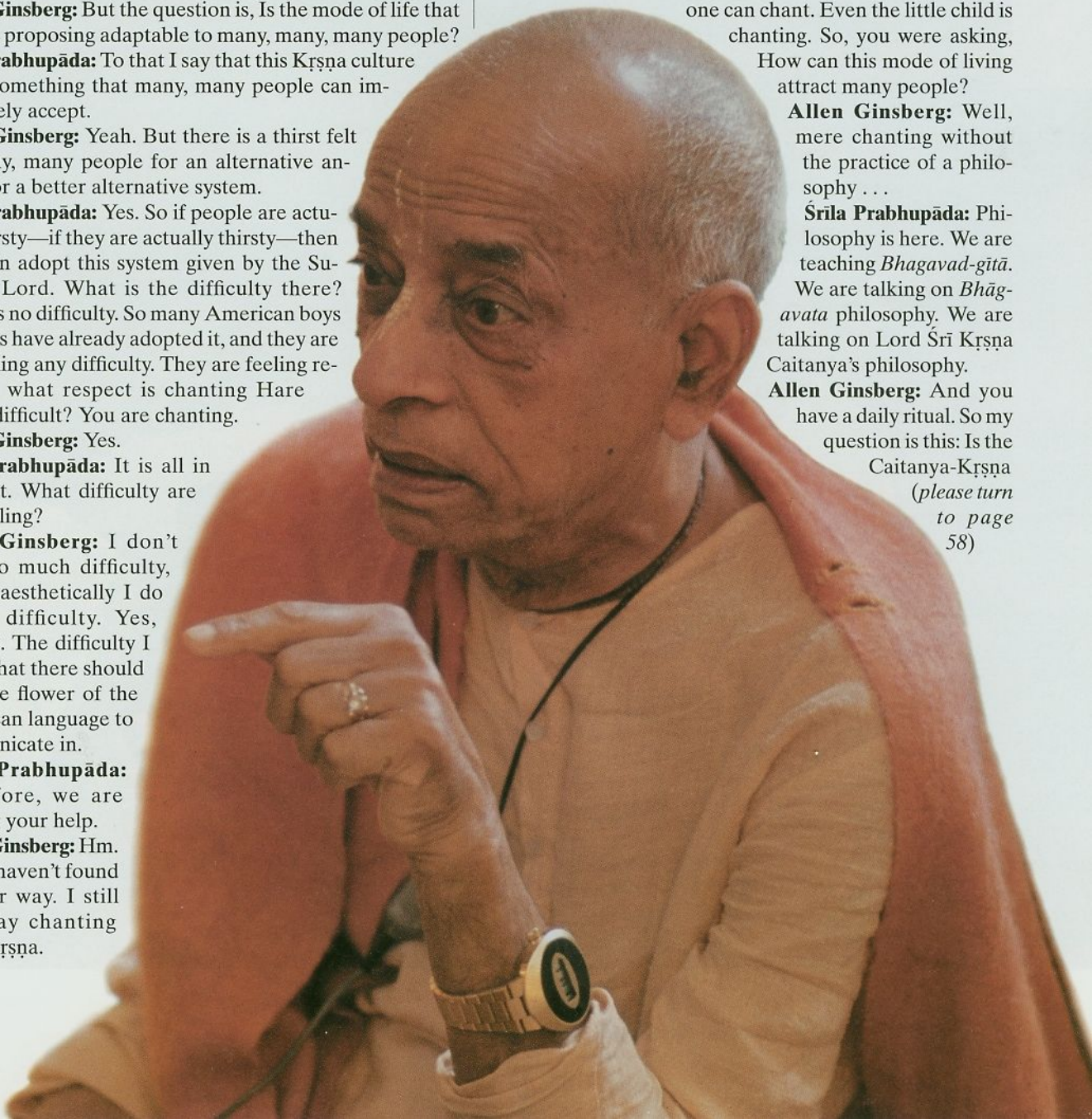
And if the Americans take this Kṛṣṇa consciousness seriously, then all other countries will take it, because America is leading at the present moment. So exalted persons like you should try to understand. What is the difficulty? There is no difficulty. Chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa—anyone can chant. Even the little child is chanting. So, you were asking, How can this mode of living attract many people?

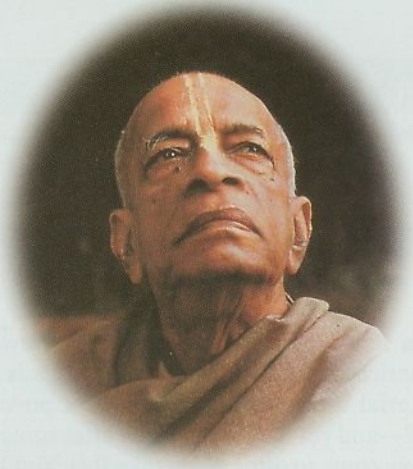
Allen Ginsberg: Well, mere chanting without the practice of a philosophy . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Philosophy is here. We are teaching *Bhagavad-gītā*. We are talking on *Bhāgavata* philosophy. We are talking on Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya's philosophy.

Allen Ginsberg: And you have a daily ritual. So my question is this: Is the Caitanya-Kṛṣṇa

(*please turn to page 58*)



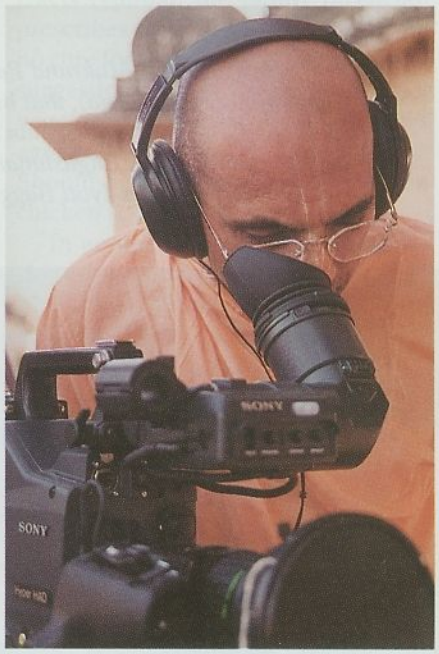


Abhay

Charan

The Television Serial on Śrīla Prabhupāda's Life

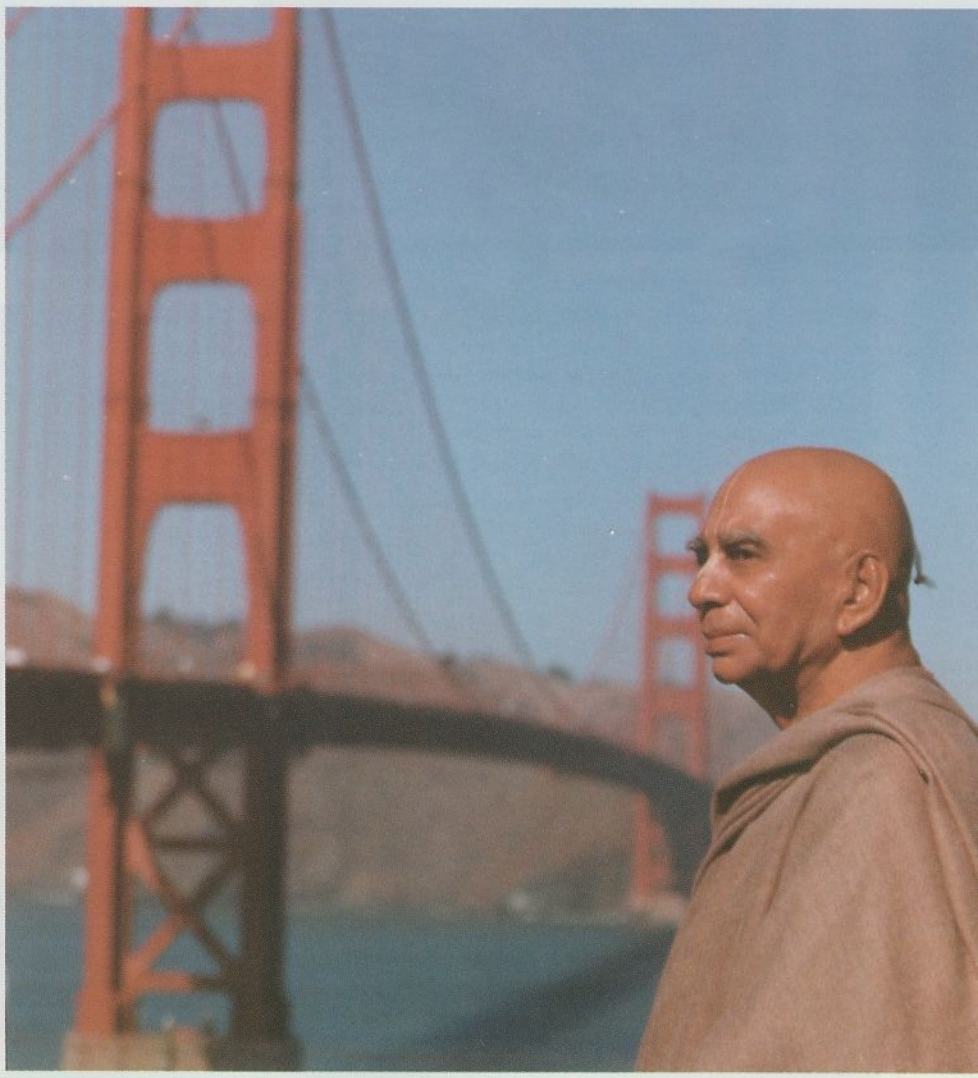
by Śyāmānanda Kṛṣṇa Dāsa



IN 1996, MEMBERS OF the International Society for Krishna Consciousness celebrated the centennial of the movement's founder, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. The celebrations inspired Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees everywhere to do whatever they could to spread knowledge of Śrīla Prabhupāda and his teachings.

Like many others, His Holiness Bhakti Cāru Swami felt a strong desire to offer something special to his spiritual master on the occasion.

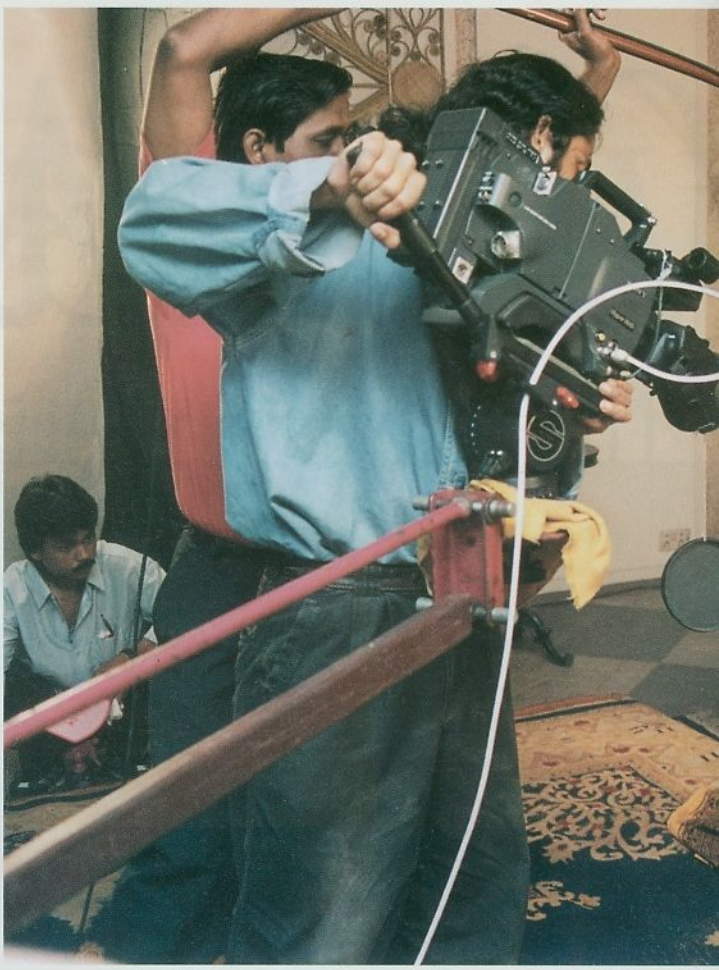
"I remember looking at a book on the greatest personalities of this century," says Bhakti Cāru Swami. "To my great disappointment, I found that Śrīla Prabhupāda's name was not mentioned. Although he is the greatest person of this age, very few people give him the recognition he deserves. His International Society for Krishna Consciousness is widely known, but hardly



Producer Bhakti Cāru Swami advises actors (left) and studies a scene through the camera (above). At right, actor J. Somayajulu, as Śrīla Prabhupāda, stands before the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco.

Photos by Govinda Dāsa

Below, Abhay (Makrand Padhya) tells his wife, Radharani (Jyoti Bagga), that he intends to move to Allahabad. At right, a horseman's wife (Sunitha) has been abducted by an Englishman. At bottom, make-up man Ali prepares Jyoti Bagga for the next scene.

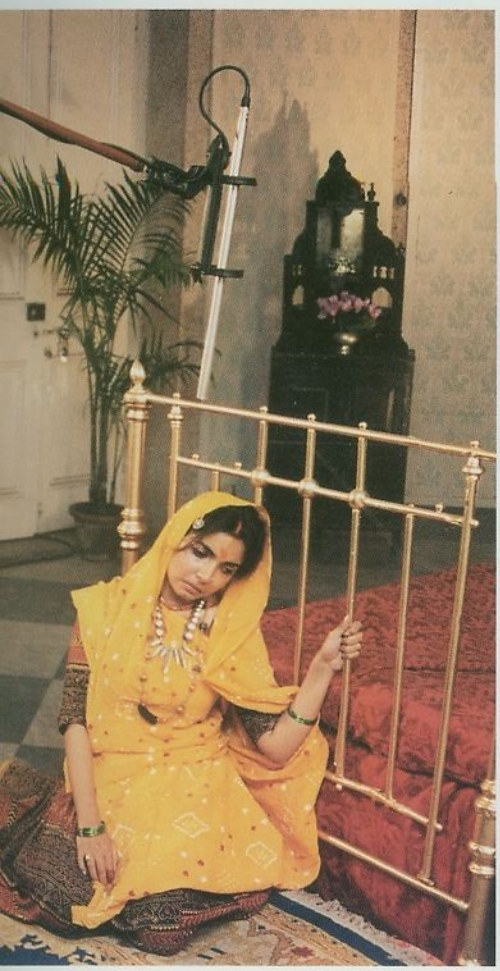


anyone knows the person behind it. I felt I should do something to make Śrīla Prabhupāda known worldwide.

"Since audio-visual media are the most prominent today, I wanted to make a film about Śrīla Prabhupāda's life and achievements. Then Hema Malini, a movie star from Bombay, gave me the idea of a TV serial. She felt it would be impossible to show Śrīla Prabhupāda's life and achievements in a two-hour movie; we would be able to show much more in a serial."

Bhakti Cāru Swami wanted to do more than just glorify Śrīla Prabhupāda. He wanted to present Śrīla Prabhupāda's life and achievements through a screenplay that would bring out his struggles, triumphs, and disappointments, and tell his story in detail.

The serial, based on the biography *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlamrta,* by His Holiness Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami, is entitled *Abhay Charan* (Śrīla Prabhupāda's birth name). It was originally shot and edited for Indian television



In a loft apartment in New York City, 1965 (right), Śrīla Prabhupāda (J. Somayajulu) engages young people in chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

in episodes of twenty-five minutes. The first episode aired on September 7, 1996, the day after Śrīla Prabhupāda's Centennial Appearance Day. The shows were then broadcast every Saturday, reaching millions of people all over India.

Prabhupāda In British India

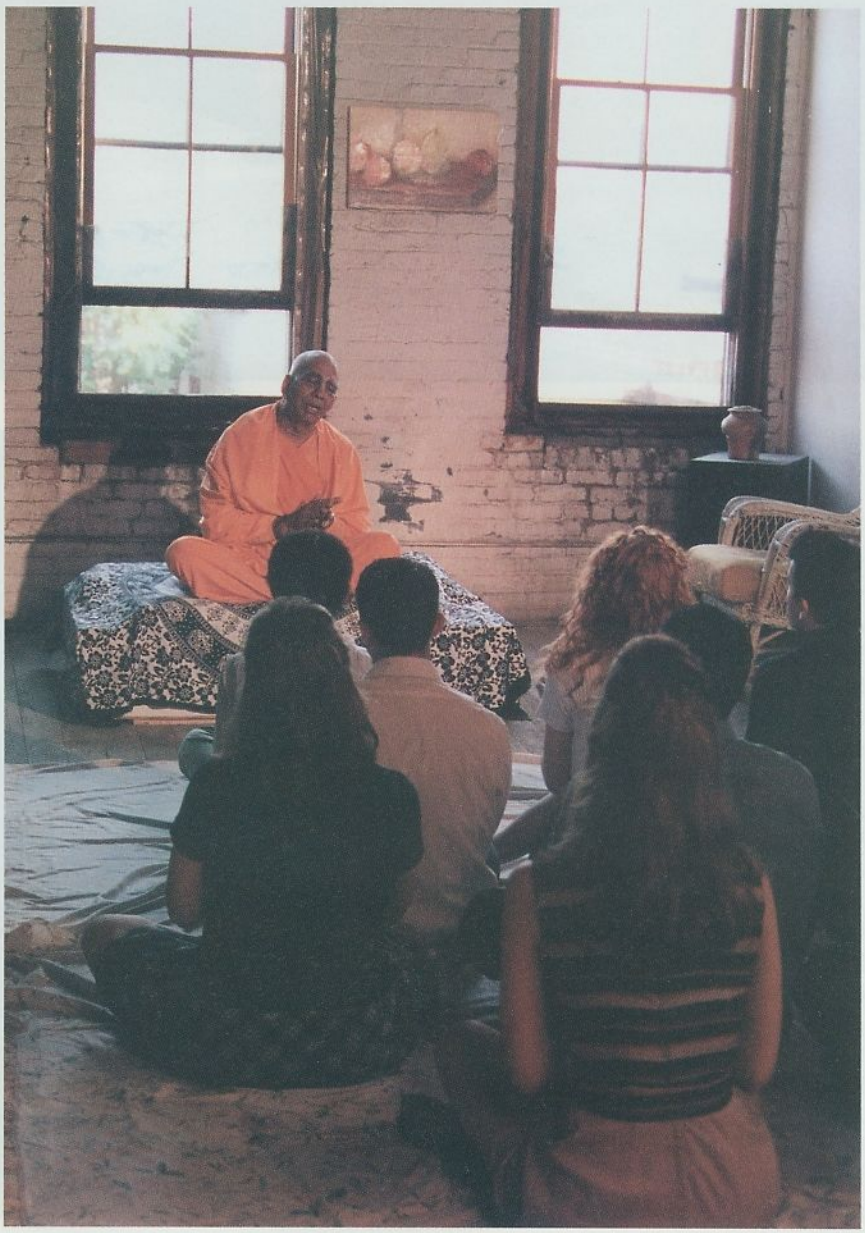
The serial brings to life the India dominated by the British Victorian imperialism in which Śrīla Prabhupāda grew up. It also gives a lucid impression of the people and events that contributed to the pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa's pure devotee.

The opening minutes of the first episode sharply contrast the British and Indian cultures in 1896. The governor of Bengal plays bridge, while Gour Mohan De, Abhay's father, celebrates Janmāṣṭamī (Lord Kṛṣṇa's appearance day). On the next day we share the joy of Abhay's parents at the birth of their son. In a delightful scene, an astrologer predicts that Abhay will spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world.

Amid scenes of Abhay's devout Vaiṣṇava upbringing are vivid portrayals of the loving care of his father, Gour Mohan, and mother, Rajani, and of the traditional Indian family life Abhay enjoyed in his early years.

The story also carries tension and drama. When two-year-old Abhay contracts typhoid, the family physician prescribes chicken broth, there being no cure for the disease at the time. The suggestion dismays the family of strict vegetarians. We feel Gour Mohan's agony as he wrestles with the decision: Should he allow Abhay to be given chicken soup?

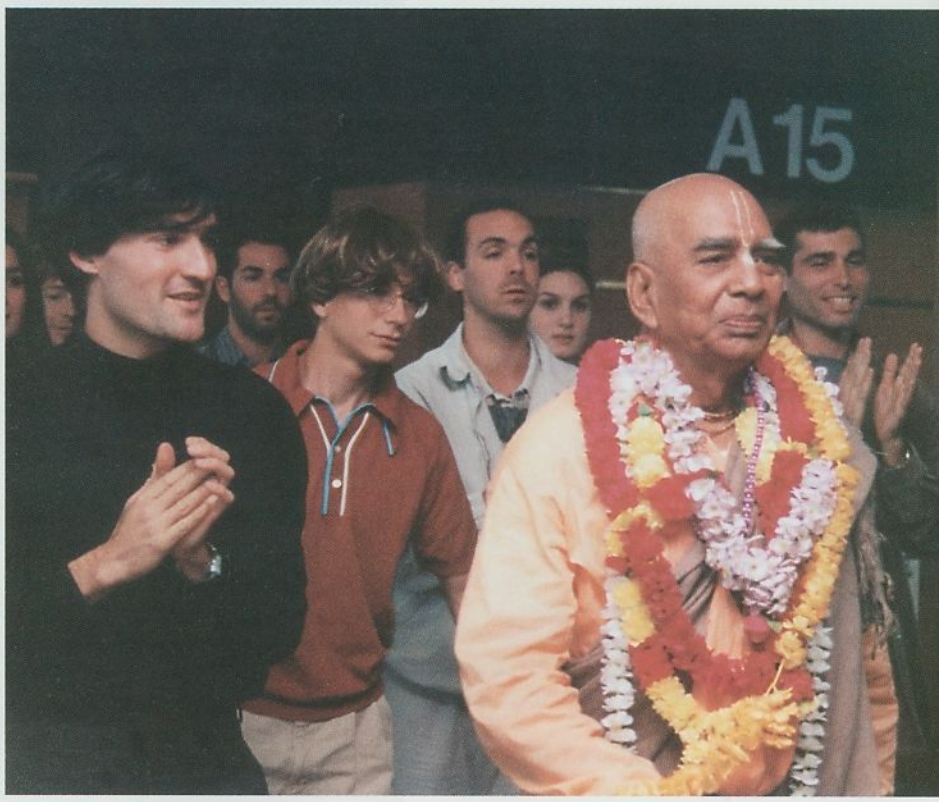
In another dramatic childhood incident, Abhay comes face to face with brutality and death. Rioting erupts between Hindus and Muslims when the British deliberately cause friction between the two communities. The young Abhay narrowly escapes being attacked and manages to run to his house amid the horror of killing and burning.

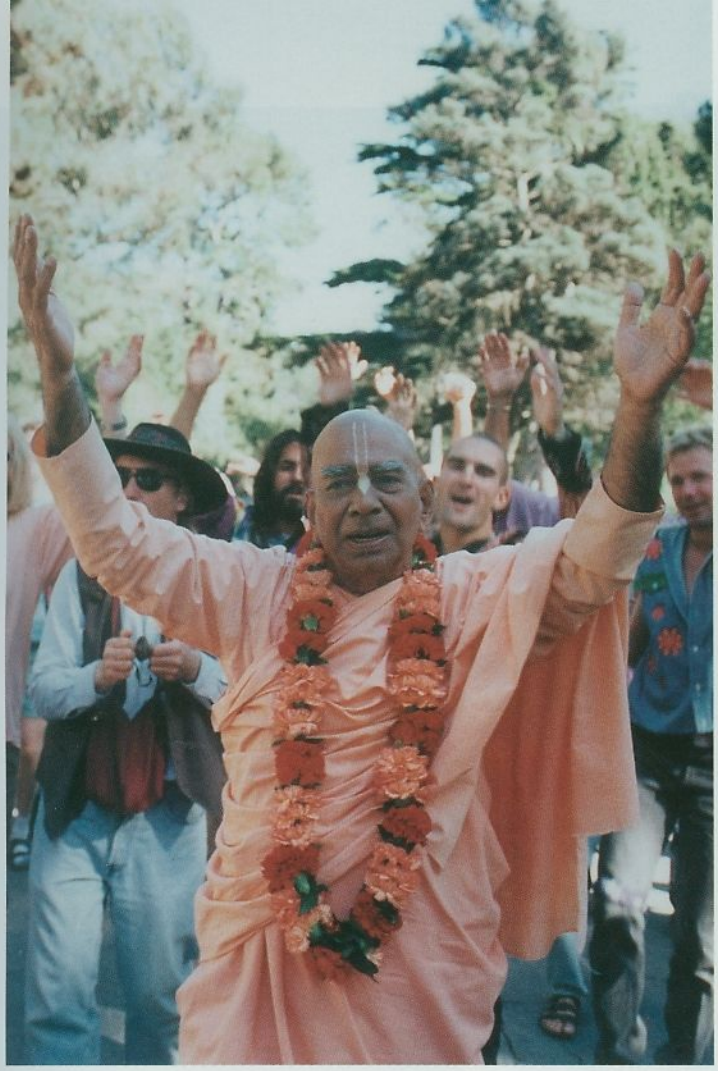


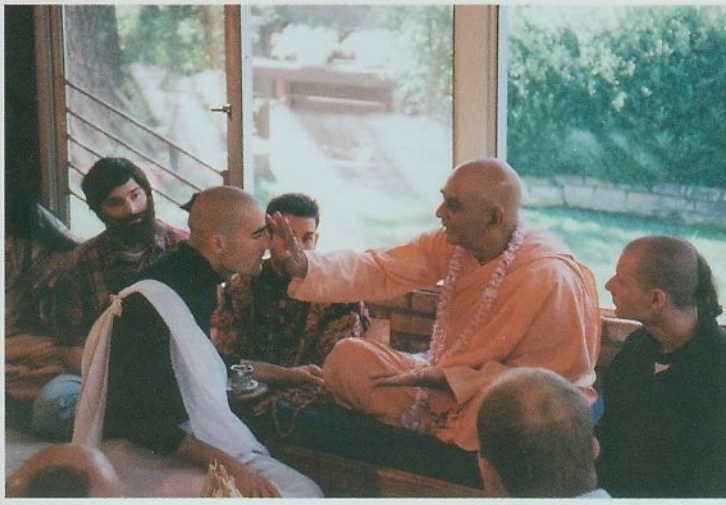
Revival of Vaiṣṇava Culture

During Abhay's childhood and youth, an important theme is the revival of Vaiṣṇava culture through the efforts of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and his son Bimala Prasad, who later becomes Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Prabhupāda's spiritual master.

In India at that time many so-called *sādhus* claimed to be God. One such yogī, Phalgu Baba, adds a fascinating dimension to the story. The ruling British, fearful of the yogī's following, deputize Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura to deal with him. The Ṭhākura confronts the yogī, promising to expose him as a mere mortal. Sitting beneath a tree near the yogī's cave, Bhaktivinoda reads from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.* The tension reaches its height when the yogī threatens to kill Bhaktivinoda and pits all his yogic powers against him.







In San Francisco's Golden Gate Park (left), Śrīla Prabhupāda leads a group of hippies in chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. Above, Śrīla Prabhupāda puts tilaka *on new initiate Śyāmasundara Dāsa (Candraśekhara Ācārya Dāsa).*

Before meeting Śrīla Prabhupāda, Keith and Wally (above, left) engaged in the typical activities of the youth of New York's Lower East Side. At left, Śrīla Prabhupāda arrives at the San Francisco airport for the first time, in 1967.

Many important events from the life of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī are woven into the story of Abhay's life. In one emotional scene, Bhaktivinoda sends the young Bimala Prasad to Gaura Kiśora Dāsa Bābājī for initiation. Determined to follow his father's instructions, Bimala approaches the Bābājī with deep humility. But the great saint feels unqualified and is determined not to accept disciples. Even so, the Bābājī eventually accepts Bimala Prasad as his only disciple.

The Gandhian

As the story of Abhay's life unfolds, his studies take him to the prestigious Scottish Churches' College in Calcutta. While there, he is attracted by the message of the charismatic Subhash Chandra Bose, a spirited nationalist, who is rallying students to oppose British domination. Abhay and his friends attend Bose's secret meetings. But when Bose and his followers advocate violence, Abhay refuses to join them and insists he will fight the British in his own way when the time is right. Abhay feels that Gandhi's call to boycott everything British is a better way to protest. Therefore, even though he passes his examinations, he refuses to accept his diploma.

Abhay's life as a householder becomes a central theme after Gour Mohan arranges for his betrothal and marriage. We see wonderful scenes of their traditional Indian wedding.

Meeting His Guru

As a husband supporting his family, Abhay becomes the manager of Dr. Bose's laboratory in Calcutta. The doctor's pharmaceutical business flourishes under Abhay's capable management. One day Abhay's friend Naren comes to the office to induce him to meet a *sādhu.* At first Abhay is reluctant, but eventually he gives in to his friend's persuasion. Together they go to meet Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, the saint who will become Abhay's spiritual master.

Abhay gives up his secure position in Dr. Bose's company and moves to Allahabad. We see how Abhay struggles to balance his pharmacy business, his family responsibilities, and his spiritual life. Many scenes show the development of his relationship with his spiritual master, including assisting his mission, the Gaudiya Math. In one moving sequence we see Śrīla Prabhupāda's initiation in 1933, when

he received the name Abhay Caraṇāravinda Dāsa.

In portraying the rest of Prabhupāda's life in India, the screen-play focuses on his writing and printing. We see his determination to overcome obstacles to write, print, and distribute *Back to Godhead* magazine. We also see how he was able to translate and print the early volumes of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* despite having to work alone. The story tells of Śrīla Prabhupāda's relationship with Sumati Morarjee and how with her help he was able to go to America aboard the Jaladuta.

Preaching in the West

The series moves on to Prabhupāda's early years in America, including his stay in Butler, Pennsylvania, with Sally and Gopal Agarwal, and his move to New York, staying at first with Dr. Mishra and then starting out on his own. As the story develops, there are scenes of his stay in the Bowery loft and later at 26 Second Avenue. Gradually his early disciples gather around him and become initiated. There are also scenes of the early chanting in Tompkins Square Park, evening lectures at 26 Second Avenue, and the beginning of the Sunday feast program.

The serial also shows how Śrīla Prabhupāda went to San Francisco and how the temple there was started. There are also scenes of the appearance of Lord Jagannātha, the first Rathayātrā, and the Prabhupāda's appearance at the Mantra Rock Dance.

The Filming Continues

Recently Bhakti Cāru Swami took his team to Europe to shoot scenes of the development of Śrīla Prabhupāda's mission there. He will return to America to shoot material showing the spread of Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout America.

Śyāmānanda Kṛṣṇa Dāsa joined ISKCON in England in 1987. In 1992 he moved to Māyāpur, India, where he served in the boys school until 1996. He was a member of Bhakti Cāru Swami's Abhay Charan *production team from its early days until late 1998.*

The Story on Video Cassette

THE SERIAL HAS BEEN edited for distribution as video cassettes. Each contains the equivalent of four television episodes, about ninety minutes. The serial was originally broadcast in Hindi, but the video cassettes are now available in English, Hindi, and Tamil. Subtitled versions are available in German, French, and Italian.

Nine video cassettes have been released, covering Prabhupāda's life in India. The complete serial will comprise more than twenty cassettes.

To order the English or Hindi version, see The Hare Kṛṣṇa Bazaar, page 64.

Chanters circle Lord Jagannātha (above, left) in Golden Gate Park. At the Mantra Rock Dance (above) in San Francisco, Śrīla Prabhupāda chants alongside Allen Ginsberg. As the sun sets (right), Śrīla Prabhupāda leads chanters on the beach.

A RULER'S QUANDARY

In the sixteenth century, the Muslim governor of Bengal loses two of his best men to the recently founded Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

by Mathureśa Dāsa

NAWAB HUSSAIN SHAH,* who ruled Bengal from A.D. 1509 to 1532, had two expert and trusted ministers in the brothers Dabhir Kas and Sakara Mallik. The Nawab had recruited the brothers from the aristocratic Karnatic *brāhmaṇa* community, given them Muslim names, and taken satisfaction in seeing them shed Hindu ways and adopt Muslim dress and customs. In taking charge of the government secretariat and freeing the Nawab from the more cumbersome duties of his administration, Dabhir Kas and Sakara Mallik became his confidantes and two of the wealthiest and most influential men in Bengal.

Bengal's Hindu community took a dim view of the brothers' achievements. Muslims were not merely low-caste or outcaste, Hindu leaders proclaimed; they were meat-eaters and cow-killers. Rubbing shoulders with them in the slightest, even accidentally, clearly called for censure and ostracism. Because Dabhir Kas and Sakara Mallik, as they now called themselves, had accepted employment from the Nawab, they practically demanded their own excommunication. No other punishment fit their crime.

Finding no way to placate their critics and regain their status as respectable Hindus, the

*Full name: Alauddina Saiyada Hussain Shah Seripha Makka.

brothers in great humility and distress wrote several confidential letters to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu at Jagannatha Puri, requesting His guidance. Lord Caitanya promised to come resolve their spiritual difficulties, and in 1513, on His way to visit the holy land of Vṛndāvana, He arrived at Ramakeli, the brothers' exquisite home village on the bank of the Ganges at the border of Bengal.

Great crowds of people joined Lord Caitanya chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and dancing through the streets of Ramakeli, alarming Muslim and Hindu leaders alike and prompting them to wonder what had occasioned the Lord's visit. Nawab Hussain Shah, while appreciating Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu as a Hindu prophet and ordering local officials to leave Him alone, appeared to be on a short fuse. And to many Hindu leaders, Lord Caitanya was a prophet only in the loosest sense, one fomenting a revolution against the brahminical caste system. There were Muslims and other untouchables chanting and dancing in those noisy crowds, and even the inner circle of the Lord's Hare Kṛṣṇa movement included at least one member, Haridāsa Ṭhākura, born in a family of cow-killing Muslims.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's devotees and friends in Ramakeli, sensing tension in the air, feared for His safety. Honoring their loving pleas, and appearing inconvenienced by the crowds that followed His every step, the Lord postponed His Vṛndāvana pilgrimage and returned to Puri, leaving both Nawab Hussain Shah and Hindu leaders to their sighs of relief as life returned to normal.

Suspicious of Sakara's reported illness, Nawab Hussain Shah shows up at Sakara's house and finds him in good health and happily studying the scripture Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

Painting by Yadurāṇī Devī Dāsī

THE BROTHERS RESIGN

Or apparently normal. For only a matter of months later news shook Bengal that Dabhir Kas and Sakara Mallik, the Nawab's right-hand men, had more or less vanished. Dabhir Kás had abruptly resigned his post, filled two large boats with his accumulated earnings in gold coins, and given away nearly all of it to relatives and religious charities at a place called Bakla Candradvipa.

Sakara Mallik too had requested permission to resign, and when the Nawab refused, had instead submitted sick reports and stayed home. Because Hussain Shah was planning an invasion of the neighboring state of Orissa, he was in no mood to allow Sakara Mallik to neglect the home front. Suspicious of the sick reports, the Nawab showed up at Sakara's house and found him in good health and happily studying the scripture *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* no doubt under the influence of the Hindu prophet Caitanya.

The temperamental ruler first tried coaxing Sakara back to work with friendly words. When that failed, he slapped him in jail and marched off to conquer the feudal princes of Orissa. In the Shah's absence Sakara escaped and, according to the jailkeeper, drowned in the Ganges, dragged under by his prison chains.

But the drowning was a ruse. Sakara had bribed the jailkeeper with ten thousand gold coins Dabhir Kas had set aside for emergencies. The two brothers had slipped away to join Lord Caitanya, who sent them to Vṛndāvana. Reliable sources confirmed too that during Lord Caitanya's recent visit to Ramakeli, the brothers, disguising themselves and crossing town in the dead of night to avoid the Nawab's detection, had met with the Lord.

"Everyone is asking why I have come to this village of Ramakeli," the Lord had told them. "I have come just to see you two brothers."

Lord Caitanya had initiated them into His Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, changing their names to Rūpa and Sanātana. So now Dabhir Kas and Sakara Mallik were known as Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī. They had left wealth, family, friends, and practically unlimited spheres of influence in their homeland, and they had permanently set aside any thought of returning to regular Hindu society, all to serve Lord Caitanya in a remote holy place.

Reports filtered back from Vṛndāvana that the brothers had shaved their heads, marked their foreheads with *tilaka* clay, and discarded the silken, bejeweled finery of their government days to wear torn cloth. With no fixed residence, they were living beneath trees, one night under one tree and the next night under another. They were begging a little food, eating only some dry bread and chickpeas, and sleeping

The Writings of Rūpa and Sanātana

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu
("The Ocean of the Nectar of Devotion") A comprehensive explanation of devotional service to the Lord. (The summary study by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda is called *The Nectar of Devotion: The Complete Science of Bhakti-yoga.*)

Dāna-keli-kaumudī
("The Moonlight of the Toll Pastime") A description of Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastime of demanding a toll from His cowherd girlfriends

Govinda-virudāvalī
("Row of Verses Crying for Govinda") Prayers to Lord Kṛṣṇa

Lalita-mādhava
("Charming Mādhava") A play about Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Mathurā and Dvārakā

Līlācchanda
("Pastimes in Meter") A poem about Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes

Mathurā-māhātmya
("The Greatness of Mathurā") Description and glorification of the greater Vṛndāvana area

Nāṭaka-varṇana
("Dramatic Description") A play about Lord Kṛṣṇa

Padyāvalī
("Row of Poems")An anthology of devotional verses

Stavāvalī
("Row of Prayers") An anthology of prayers

Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi
("Splendid Bluish-Black Jewel") A description of various pastimes in Vṛndāvana

Vidagdha-mādhava
("Tormented Mādhava") [Kṛṣṇa in the mood of separation from His beloved] A play about Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Vṛndāvana

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī

Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛta
("The Great Nectar of the Supreme Lord and His Devotees") An elaborate work describing the material and spiritual worlds and one devotee's gradual progress to Lord Kṛṣṇa's abode

Daśama-carita
("Tenth [Canto] Pastimes") Poetry about the Tenth Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*

Daśama-ṭippanī
("Tenth [Canto] Commentary") A commentary on the Tenth Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*)

Hari-bhakti-vilāsa
("Chapters on Devotion to Hari [Kṛṣṇa]") A comprehensive guide to Vaiṣṇava behavior and rituals

Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī
("For the Pleasure of the Devotees") A commentary on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*

Rūpa and Sanātana became the objects of love and honor for all the great stalwart devotees of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

• • •

hardly at all. Through these willing hardships they happily chanted the holy names of Kṛṣṇa, dancing in great jubilation throughout Vṛndāvana. Finding the opportunity to employ their considerable erudition to scrutinize the world's revealed scriptures (they were fluent in Persian, Arabic, and Sanskrit), they were writing books to establish eternal, universal religious principles.

Back home, Muslim and Hindu alike wondered how the brothers could even talk of religion. Dabhir Kas and Sakara Mallik had first lost their status as Hindus, then offended Hussain Shah as well. Weren't they aware that no religious person would take them seriously? And how long could these wealthy, aristocratic gentlemen survive as humble mendicants after their lives of luxury and prestige? Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's cult might temporarily attract those shaken by the crises of youth or middle age, and certainly the brothers had been traumatized by losing their Hindu birthright, but nothing could ultimately replace the identity everyone centers on the traditions of home, family, country, and career. As time wore on, Dabhir and Sakara would inevitably return to lives as stable, upwardly mobile professionals.

Yet as the years passed, Dabhir Kas and Sakara Mallik stayed in Vṛndāvana, joyfully writing and preaching for Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission. Competition for position at the Nawab's secretariat had begun at the first hint of the brothers' resignations, with Sakara Mallik's former post as head of the secretariat finally going to an undersecretary named Purandhara Khan. As further reminders of the brothers' absence, hundreds and thousands of followers of Lord Caitanya were appearing in every town and village in Bengal and throughout India. Wherever Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu had traveled, His devotees filled bustling marketplaces with their loud singing, greeted travelers at busy intersections and begged them to chant the holy names of Kṛṣṇa, and in many ways reminiscent of Dabhir and Sakara, or Rūpa and Sanātana, gave their lives to the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

Ask these Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees how Rūpa and Sanātana were doing, and they would have the latest word on the brothers' activities in Vṛndāvana. "Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs have received the causeless mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu," these nonenvious followers might typically say with pride. "Deeply attracted by the transcendental qualities of the Lord, the brothers are exact replicas of Lord Caitanya and are very, very dear to Him. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has empowered them to spread the transcendental news of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. Rūpa and Sanātana very carefully follow the principles enunciated by the Lord, constantly thinking of Lord Caitanya and His mission. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī, and their nephew Jiva Gosvāmī, as well as practically all of their family members, live in Vṛndāvana and publish important books on devotional service to Kṛṣṇa. What is impossible for persons who have been granted the Lord's mercy?"

Rūpa and Sanātana, once the pride of the Nawab's cabinet, the envy of their Muslim under-workers, and the objects of scorn from caste-conscious Hindus, were now leaders in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. Because true spiritual life is without envy, their leadership made them the objects of love and honor for all the great stalwart devotees of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

The Nawab's Realization

Nawab Hussain Shah had to resign himself at last to the loss of his two talented ministers. Watching with wonder and apprehension as the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement spread to every corner of his realm, he had occasion to remember his days with Rūpa and Sanātana. In Ramakeli during Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's visit, the Nawab had privately questioned Dabhir Kas, the future Rūpa Gosvāmī, about the Lord. Dabhir Kas had replied, "The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who gave you this kingdom and whom you accept as a prophet, has taken birth in your country. By His blessings, you will attain victory everywhere."

"But why are you questioning me?" he had continued. "As king, you are the representative of God. What does your heart tell you about Lord Caitanya?"

"I consider Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to be the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead," the Nawab had answered. "There is no doubt about it."

But Hussain Shah had mixed feelings. He had acknowledged Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu both as the Supreme Lord and as a troublesome holy man. Hussain Shah was after all a ruler and a politician, and Lord Caitanya, Personality of Godhead or not, had created a significant upheaval in his kingdom. What had the Lord said to cause two talented ministers to leave their lucrative posts and join the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement? What had caused so many others to follow the brothers' example, chanting the holy names of Kṛṣṇa and dancing in the streets?

What, in short, had been the teachings of Lord Caitanya to Rūpa and Sanātana?

(Next issue: "Lord Caitanya's Teachings to Rūpa Gosvāmī.")

Mathureśa Dāsa, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, has written many articles for Back to Godhead *and other publications. He and his wife and their four children live in Alachua, Florida.*

CALENDAR

This calendar is calculated for Mayapur, West Bengal, India. The dates, derived from a lunar calendar, may vary by one day for other locations. Consult your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for the exact dates for your area.

Because the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement comes in disciplic line from Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the calendar includes not only dates relevant to all followers of the Vedic tradition but also dates relating to Lord Caitanya's associates and prominent spiritual masters in His disciplic succession.

Month of Govinda
(February 20–March 20)

MARCH

2—Vijayā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

5—Śrī Śiva Rātri, a day in honor of Lord Śiva.

7—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī, the great devotee in the disciplic line from Lord Caitanya who confirmed Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's discovery of Lord Caitanya's birthplace.

16—Amalakī-vrata Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

17—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī, the spiritual master of Lord Caitanya's spiritual master.

20—Śrī Gaura Pūrṇimā, the appearance anniversary of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Kṛṣṇa Himself in the role of His own devotee. Fasting till moonrise, followed by a break-fast of Ekādaśī *prasādam* (no grains or beans). Feasting tomorrow.

Month of Viṣṇu
(March 21–April 18)

28—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, one of Lord Caitanya's principal associates.

31—Pāpamocanī Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

APRIL

9—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Rāmānujācārya, a Vaiṣṇava philosopher and spiritual master who appeared in the eleventh century.

12—Śrī Rāma Navamī, the appearance anniversary of Lord Rāmacandra. Fasting till sunset, followed by feasting.

14—Kāmadā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

18—Śrī Kṛṣṇa Vasanta Rāsa, Lord Kṛṣṇa's springtime *rāsa* dance. Balarāma Rāsa Yātrā, Lord Balarāma's *rāsa* dance. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Śyāmānanda Paṇḍita, a follower of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

Month of Madhusūdana
(April 19–May 18)

29—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura, the author of *Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata,* a biography on Lord Caitanya.

30—Varūthinī Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

MAY

4—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Gadādhara Paṇḍita, one of Lord Caitanya's principal associates.

6—Beginning of Candana Yātrā, the festival of anointing Lord Jagannātha with sandalwood pulp for twenty-one days.

12—Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Sītā Devī, the consort of Lord Rāmacandra. Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Jāhnavā Devī, the consort of Lord Nityānanda Prabhu. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Madhu Paṇḍita, a great devotee of Lord Caitanya.

14—Mohinī Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

15—Rukmiṇī Dvādaśī, the appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī Devī, the consort of Lord Kṛṣṇa as Dvārakādīśa, the Lord of Dvārakā.

16—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jayānanda Prabhu, a dedicated disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda who helped him bring the Rathayātrā festival to the Western world.

17—Nṛsiṁha Caturdaśī, the appearance anniversary of Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva, Lord Kṛṣṇa's half-man, half-lion incarnation. Fasting till dusk, followed by feasting.

18—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī, the spiritual master of Lord Caitanya's spiritual master. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, a follower of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Parameśvara Purī, an associate of Lord Caitanya.

PASSING FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

Remarks by the former editor of BTG at a rite of passage for his nephew, Liam Golightley, on Liam's thirteenth birthday.

by Jayādvaita Swami

I CONGRATULATE YOU, Liam, on this rite of passage. And I invite you, Liam, just for a moment—I invite all of us, just for a moment—to think about who it is that's passing.

We pass into this world at birth, we pass from childhood through school and into adulthood, we marry, we pass further, into old age, and then, as the language has it, we pass on, we pass away.

But who is this "we"? Who is this person? Or, in our present ceremony, who is this Liam?

Some would tell us, Liam, that you are an extraordinarily complex biological machine, formed of intricate networks of cells and tissue, of blood and bones and organs and neurons, a splendid unit of chemicals working in unison, bubbling away—but nothing more.

Oh, you have a mind, too. You have thoughts and desires and feelings. You have consciousness. But they are nothing more than output from the machinery. What you finally come down to, Liam, is not so much a who as an "it." You are a body with a name on it—"Liam"—today passing from newness to full development on your way to decrepitude and finally to extinction. Congratulations.

But I would like to suggest to you, Liam, that those who think of you in this way have got you wrong, that they are seeing only what's outside and missing what's deeper within, that they are awed by the machine but missing the living person within the machine. They are seeing the car but somehow failing to recognize the driver.

I would offer to you that the real Liam is not the machine, not the body, not an agglomeration of matter on a journey from nowhere to nowhere, but the spark of life, the spark of consciousness, within the body.

That spark of life can't be cut, can't be dried, can't be broken or withered or blown away. It can't be created and can never be destroyed. And it is that eternally existing person—that eternal spirit, that spark of consciousness—that passes from one stage of life to another, from one body to another, from the body of a child, to the body of a youth, to a body of old age—and then onward to another body—or to liberation from this cycle of repeated birth and death—in a continuing spiritual journey.

This is not something, Liam, I would ask you simply to believe because your uncle believes it, or accept because your uncle accepts it, but—as you enter manhood—to think about, to scrutinize, to wonder about, to consider. I invite you to ponder whether there's a difference between Liam the organism and Liam the person, Liam the body and Liam the soul, Liam the machine and Liam the spirit.

The animals can't think about these things—they don't have the brain for it. But a human being can—and this, then, is the real business, the real opportunity, the real purpose, of human life.

And now, as you enter manhood, I encourage you to take that business seriously, take up that purpose, and pass not only from one biological stage to the next, from one social role to another, but—as a verse in Sanskrit has it—from darkness to light, from matter to spirit, from the temporary to the eternal.

I wish you all peace and all spiritual success in your life. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

(*continued from page 43*)

ritual, as you have it here in this house and in the other ashrams—is this something that a large mass of people can enter into?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: In time, yes. Why not?

Allen Ginsberg: In America?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. This we have already seen. Virtually all my students are Americans. And Kṛṣṇa consciousness is spreading.

Allen Ginsberg: Yes, but what it requires is an adaptation to Indian dress and . . .

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is not very important.

Allen Ginsberg: And an adaptation to Indian food.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, no. Indian food—it is not Indian food. Are you not eating fruits?

Allen Ginsberg: Yes, yes.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then that is Indian food? Do you mean to say it is Indian food?

Allen Ginsberg: Well, the curried vegetable dishes.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Vegetables you may simply steam, if you like. That doesn't matter. It doesn't matter whether you take our specific taste. No. That is not the program, that to become Kṛṣṇa conscious you have to change your taste. No. We say what Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā. Patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyaṁ yo me bhaktyā prayacchati:* "Anyone who offers Me with devotion these vegetables, fruits, flowers, milk—I accept that." So we are determined to satisfy Kṛṣṇa, and therefore we are selecting foodstuffs from these groups.

And these foodstuffs you are already accepting. Don't you take vegetables? Don't you take fruits? Don't you take grains? So where is the new item? Now, insofar as cooking is concerned, you can cook according to your own taste. But the food groups must be these. Not flesh. Because Kṛṣṇa does not say, "Offer Me flesh."

This, very simply, is our program. And you are already eating grains, vegetables, and fruits, and you are drinking milk. So where is the difference? I don't find any difference.

Allen Ginsberg: Well, I suppose not. You could say there is no difference, because the food is basically the same materially. It's just a question of the style.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. My style and your style may be different. That's all right. In any event, to maintain health and keep body and soul together, you require eating, you require sleeping, you require mating, you require defending. We don't say that you don't do this.

Arjuna wanted to be nonviolent and not engage in defending: "Oh, what is the use of fighting?"

Kṛṣṇa said, "No. It is required. You should." Defending is part of this Kṛṣṇa culture. So where is the difference? There is no difference. Simply we are adjusting things so that you may become truly happy. Any intelligent man will accept this cultural idea. We are not prohibiting things, but rather, we are adjusting things. So there is no difficulty. Intelligent persons like you should try to understand and take this idea and distribute it, because your country is in want of this.

Allen Ginsberg: But there is a limit to how much the pronunciation of Kṛṣṇa will spread, I think. There's a limit.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Hmm. No limit. You can pronounce Kṛṣṇa in any way. For instance, K-r-i-s-h-n-a. You can pronounce Kṛṣṇa in any way. *Niyamitaḥ smaraṇe na kālaḥ.* No hard and fast rules, no limits.

Allen Ginsberg: The limit is people's prejudice.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: We don't say, "Why are you chanting Kṛṣṇa like this?" We never say that. We simply say, "Please try to chant Kṛṣṇa."

Allen Ginsberg: Or let us say there would be a limit until the word *Kṛṣṇa* became as common in English as any other English word.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: It is already in the dictionary. In all dictionaries you will find Kṛṣṇa. What more do you want?

Allen Ginsberg: Something that will not disturb truck drivers.

Disciple: They can say Christ. They can say Kṛṣṇa. It is the same.

Allen Ginsberg: True. But they don't say Christ. [*Laughs.*]

Śrīla Prabhupāda: I have read one book, the *Aquarian Gospel,* wherein it is explained that Krist means love. Christ means love. And Kṛṣṇa also means love. So from *Kṛṣṇa* this word *Krist* has come. And in India sometimes people say Kristha. Instead of Kṛṣṇa, they say Kristha. And in various regions has come the word *Kestha.* Generally, instead of pronouncing very precisely Kṛṣṇa, if somebody's name is Kṛṣṇacandra, they say, "Hey, Kesthara."

Allen Ginsberg: Where is this?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: In India everywhere. Kestha. So Kestha, Christ, Krist, Kristha, or Kṛṣṇa—they're in the same group. Pronouncing Kṛṣṇa is not difficult.

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Washington, D.C. — 10310 Oaklyn Dr., Potomac, Maryland 20854/ Tel. (301) 299-2100/ Fax: (301) 299-5025/ E-mail: potomac@bbt.se

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Alachua, Florida (New Ramana-reti) — P.O. Box 819, 32616/ Tel. & fax: (904) 462-2017/ E-mail: alachua@bbt.se
Carriere, Mississippi (New Talavan) — 31492 Anner Rd., 39426/ Tel. (601) 749-9460 or 799-1354/ Fax: (601) 799-2924/ E-mail: talavan@datastar.net
Gurabo, Puerto Rico (New Govardhana Hill) — P. O. Box 1338, 00778/ Tel. (787) 737-3917/ E-mail: nrshingha@aol.com
Hillsborough, North Carolina (New Goloka) — 1032 Dimmocks Mill Rd., 27278/ Tel. (919) 732-6492/ Fax: (919) 732-8033/ E-mail: bkgoswami@compuserve.com
Moundsville, West Virginia (New Vrindavan) — R.D. No. 1, Box 319, Hare Krishna Ridge, 26041/ Tel. (304) 843-1600; Guest House, (304) 845-5905/ Fax: (304) 854-0023/ E-mail: palaceofgold@juno.com
Mulberry, Tennessee (Murari-sevaka) — Rt. No. 1, Box 146-A, 37359/ Tel. (615) 759-6888/ Fax: (615) 759-5785/ E-mail: 104400.3353@compuserve.com
Port Royal, Pennsylvania (Gita Nagari) — R.D. No. 1, Box 839, 17082/ Tel. & fax: (717) 527-4101/ E-mail: acyutadasi@acsworld.net

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

Eugene, Oregon — Govinda's Vegetarian Buffet, 270 W. 8th St., 97401/ Tel. (503) 686-3531
Gainesville, Florida — Balaji Indian Cuisine, 2106 SW 34th St., 32608/ Tel. (352) 378-2955
San Juan, Puerto Rico — Gopal, 201B Calle Tetuan, Viejo San Juan, 00901/ Tel. (787) 724-0229

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Cardiff, Wales — 18 Greenfield Place, Caerphilly, Mid Glamorgan/ Tel. +44 (01222) 831579
Cork, Ireland — Highland Cottage, 81, Lower Glanmire Road, Cork City/ Tel. (021) 552976/ E-mail: cork@bbt.se
Coventry, England — Sri Sri Radha Krishna Cultural Centre, Kingfield Rd., Radford, West Midlands (mail: 19 Gloucester St., CV1 3BZ)/ Tel. +44 (01203) 552822 or 555420/ E-mail: haridas.kds@bbt.se
Glasgow, Scotland — Karuna Bhavan, Bankhouse Rd., Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire ML11 0ES/ Tel. +44 (01555) 894790/ Fax: +44 (01555) 894526/ E-mail: 106225.2716@compuserve.com
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Manchester, England — 20 Mayfield Rd., Whalley Range, M16 8FT/ Tel. +44 (0161) 226-4416/ Tel. & fax: +44 (0161) 860-6117/ E-mail: krishna.dharma@bbt.se
Newcastle upon Tyne, England — 304 Westgate Rd., NE4 6AR/ Tel. +44 (0191) 272-1911
Plymouth, England — 2 Windermere Crescent, Derriford, Devon, PL6 5HX/ Tel +44 (01752) 776708/ E-mail: dhirasanta@bbt.se
Romford, England — 3 Rowan Walk, Hornchurch, Essex, RM11 2JA/ Tel. +44 (01708) 454092

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Lisnaskea, Northern Ireland — Govindadvipa Dhama, ISKCON Inishrath Island, BT92 9GN, Co. Fermanagh/ Tel. +44 (013657) 21512 or 22682
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AUSTRALASIA

AUSTRALIA

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Brisbane — 95 Bank Rd., Graceville (mail: P.O. Box 83, Indooroopilly), QLD 4068/ Tel. +61 (07) 3379-5455/ Fax: +61 (07) 3379-5880/ E-mail: brisbane@bbt.se
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Melbourne — 197 Danks St., Albert Park (mail: P.O. Box 125), VIC 3206/ Tel. +61 (03) 9699-5122/ Fax: +61 (03) 9690-4093/ E-mail: melbourne@iskcon.net
Perth — 144 Railway Parade (mail: P.O. Box 102), Bayswater, WA 6053)/ Tel. +61 (08) 9370-1552/ Fax: +61 (08) 9272-6636/ E-mail: perth@bbt.se
Sydney — 180 Falcon St., North Sydney, NSW 2060 (mail: P.O. Box 459, Cammeray, NSW 2062)/ Tel. +61 (02) 9959-4558/ Fax: +61 (02) 9957-1893/ E-mail: sraduucp@sraddha.dialix.oz.au

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Bambra (New Nandagram) — Oak Hill, Dean's Marsh Rd., VIC 3241/ Tel. +61 (052) 887383/ Fax: +61 (052) 887309
Millfield, NSW — New Gokula Farm, Lewis Lane (off Mt. View Rd. near Cessnock [mail: P.O. Box 399, Cessnock]), NSW 2325)/ Tel. +61 (049) 981800/ Fax: (Sydney temple)
Murwillumbah (New Govardhana) — Tyalgum Rd., Eungella, via Murwillumbah (mail: P.O. Box 687), NSW 2484/ Tel. & fax: +61 (02) 6672-6579 or -3047

RESTAURANTS

Adelaide — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 79 Hindley St., SA 5000/ Tel. +61 (08) 8231-5258
Brisbane — Govindas, 1st Floor, 99 Elizabeth St., QLD 4000/ Tel. +61 (07) 3210-0255

Brisbane — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 190 Brunswick St., Fortitude Valley, QLD/ Tel. +61 (07) 3854-1016/ E-mail: brisbane@bbt.se
Melbourne — Crossways, 1st Floor, 123 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (03) 9650-2939/ E-mail: crossways@iskcon.net
Melbourne — Gopals, 139 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (03) 9650-1578
Perth — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 200 William St., Northbridge, WA 6003/ Tel. +61 (08) 9227-1684/ E-mail: perth@bbt.se
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Suva, Fiji — Joyce Place, Off Pilling Rd. Nasinu 7½ miles, Samabula (mail: P.O. Box 2183, Gov.'t Bldgs.)/ Tel: +679 393 599/ E-mail: vdas@govnet.gov.fj
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Auckland, NZ — Gopal's, Civic House (1st Floor), 291 Queen St./ Tel. +64 (09) 303-4885
Christchurch, NZ — Gopal's, 143 Worcester St./ Tel. +64 (03) 366-7035
Labasa, Fiji — Hare Krishna Restaurant, Naseakula Road/ Tel. +679 811364
Lautoka, Fiji — Gopal's, Corner of Yasawa St. and Naviti St./ Tel. +679 662990
Suva, Fiji — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, 18 Pratt St./ Tel. +679 314154/ E-mail: vdas@govnet.gov.fj
Suva, Fiji — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, Dolphins FNPF Place, Victoria Parade/ Tel. +679 314154/ E-mail: vdas@govnet.gov.fj
Suva, Fiji — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, Terry Walk, Cumming St./ Tel. +679 312295/ E-mail: vdas@govnet.gov.fj

EUROPE (partial list)*

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Berlin — Cuvrystrasse 1, 10997/ Tel. & fax: +49 (030) 536 98789/ E-mail: hariballabha.hks@bbt.se
Budapest — Mariaremetei ut. 77, 1028 II/ Tel. & fax: +36 (01) 275-8140/ E-mail:100263.3167@compuserve.com
Copenhagen (Hillerød) — Baunevej 23, 3400 Hillerød/ Tel. +45 4828-6446/ Fax: +45 4828-7331/ E-mail: dk.community@bbt.se
Gutenstein, Austria — Vedisches Kulturzeutrum, Markt 58, 2770/ Tel. & fax: +43 (02) 634-7731/ E-mail: austria@bbt.se
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◆ **Lisbon** — Rua Dona Estafania 91 R/C, 1000/ Te/. & fax: +351 (01) 314-0314/ E-mail: nitaitrade@mail.telepac.pt
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Oslo — Jonsrudvej 1G, 0274/ Tel. +47 (022) 552243/ Fax: +47 (022) 558172
Paris — 31 Rue Jean Vacquier, 93160 Noisy le Grand/ Tel. +33 (01) 4304-3263/ Fax: +33 (01) 4305-7864/ E-mail: parisisvara@wanadoo.fr
Prague — Jilova 290, Praha 5-Zlicin 155 21/ Tel. +42 (02) 5795-0391 or -0401/ Fax: +42 (02) 302-1628/ E-mail: prague@bbt.se
Rome — Hare Krishna Forum, Piaza Campo de' Fiori 27, 00186/ Tel. +39 (06) 683-2660
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Zürich — Bergstrasse 54, 8030/ Tel. +41 (01) 262-3388/ Fax: +41 (01) 262-3114/ E-mail: syamananda.sns@bbt.se

RURAL COMMUNITIES

France (La Nouvelle Mayapura) — Domaine d'Oublaisse, 36360, Lucay le Mâle/ Tel. +33 (02) 5440-2395/ Fax: +33 (02) 5440-2823/ E-mail: argm@wanadoo.fr
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Barcelona — Restaurante Govinda, Plaza de la Villa de Madrid 4–5, 08002/ Tel. +34 (93) 318-7729
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◆ **Hong Kong** — 27 Chatham Rd. South, 6/F, Kowloon/ Tel. +852 (2) 7396818/ Fax: +852 (2) 724-2186/ E-mail: iskcon.hong.kong@pronto.bbt.se
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Guayaquil, Ecuador — 6 de Marzo 226 or V. M. Rendon/ Tel. +593 (04) 308412 or 309420/ E-mail: gurumanl@ecua.net.ec
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Mexico City, Mexico — Tiburcio Montiel 45, Colonia San Miguel, Chapultepec D.F., 11850/ Tel. & fax: +52 (5) 271-1953/ E-mail: mexico@bbt.se
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil — (contact ISKCON Teresopolis: CP 92430, Varzea, CEP 25951 970/ Tel. +55(021) 262-8208/ E-mail: rasananda.swami@bbt.se)
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Port Elizabeth, South Africa — 15 Whitehall Court, Western Rd., 6000
Port Harcourt, Nigeria — Umuebule 11, 2nd tarred road (mail: P.O. Box 4429), Trans Amadi
Pretoria, South Africa — 1189 Church St., Hatfield, 0083 (mail: P.O. Box 14077, Hatfield, 0028)/ Tel. & fax: +27 (12) 342-6216/ E-mail: iskconpt@global.co.za

RURAL COMMUNITY

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★ New listing ◆ Temples with restaurants or dining ● Revised listing *The full list appears in the Jan / Feb and Jul / Aug issues.

How God Is Great

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA WOULD often say that from the Vedic literature we learn not only that God is great but in what ways He is great. Before coming to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I had only a vague idea of God. Now, like millions of others, I've gained a wealth of knowledge about God from Śrīla Prabhupāda through his presentation of revealed Vedic wisdom. The following short list includes just some of the many things Śrīla Prabhupāda taught us about God:

God is the supreme person, whose form is eternal and full of bliss and knowledge.

God has innumerable forms, of which the original is Kṛṣṇa, a beautiful dark-blue cowherd boy who plays the flute and sports a peacock feather on His head.

God is unlimited in all respects.

God is the source of everything.

God can be seen by devotees whose vision is purified by unalloyed love.

God attracts everyone, either directly or through His material energy.

God knows everything—past, present, and future.

God has His eternal home, Goloka Vṛndāvana, in the spiritual world.

God's all-powerful Nārāyaṇa expansions rule innumerable spiritual planets, called Vaikuṇṭhas.

Although God expands forms equal to Himself in power, He is never diminished in the least.

God breathed the *Vedas,* which contain all knowledge required for human existence.

God spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā* five thousand years ago.

God is all-loving, and He created each of us to enjoy eternally with Him in one of His innumerable forms.

In His original form as Kṛṣṇa, God enjoys the most intimate exchanges with His confidential devotees.

God especially enjoys with His pleasure potency, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

God's agents manage the universe while He enjoys with His devotees.

Though eternally residing in Goloka Vṛndāvana, God is simultaneously present everywhere, even within the atom.

As the original male, God impregnates nature with rebellious souls, who then take on material bodies.

As the Supersoul, God accompanies us throughout our sojourn in the material world.

We living beings are infinitesimal parts of God, and our qualities—consciousness, the will to live, and so on—are samples of His unlimited qualities.

God is fully present in the sound of His names, which are identical with Him.

God appears in the form of the Deity to accept our worship.

God is called Bhagavān ("possessor of opulence") because He possesses in full the six primary opulences: beauty, wealth, strength, fame, knowledge, and renunciation.

God comes to this world repeatedly in various forms to subdue the demonic, please His devotees, and reestablish religion.

God descended five hundred years ago as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and introduced the chanting of His names as the religion for the age.

God controls the sun, the rain, nature—everything—and unlike us is never subject to anyone's control.

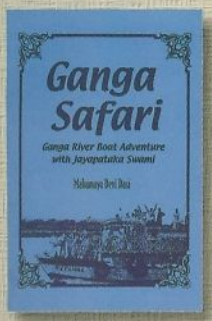
The powerful forces of nature are only a hint of God's omnipotence.

God directs the creation, maintenance, and destruction of the universe.

In His form as Mahā-Viṣṇu, God creates millions of universes when He exhales and destroys them when He inhales—one breath taking hundreds of trillions of years.

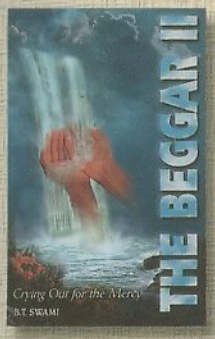
God's expansion Ananta Śeṣa, who has innumerable mouths, has never been able to adequately describe God's glories, although trying to do so eternally.—*Nagarāja Dāsa*

Check Out These New Items!

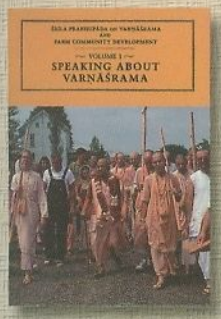


Books

Ganga Safari — by Mahamaya Devi Dasi
Join Jayapatāka Swami and a small group of devotees as they travel down the Ganges River in search of holy places, many inaccessible by road. Travel with them as they hold Kṛṣṇa conscious programs in small villages throughout Bengal. Mahāmāyā Devī Dāsī recounts the adventure in an engaging, personal style. Softbound, 56 pages, **$4.95**



The Beggar II: Crying Out for the Mercy — by B. T. Swami. Prayer prevails in all religions because calling out for God's mercy transforms our spirit from despair to hope. And by calling out to those who have succeeded spiritually before us, we too can succeed. Bhakti Tirtha Swami shows us how challenges can serve as great opportunities for growth. Softbound, 169 pages, **$11.95**



Speaking About Varṇāśrama
Śrīla Prabhupāda on Varṇāśrama and Farm Community Development
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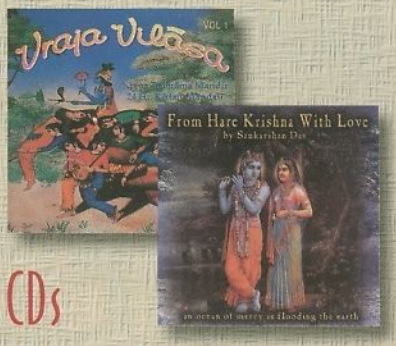

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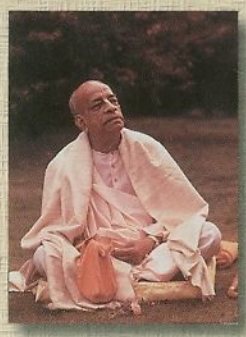
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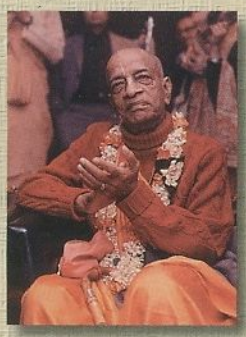
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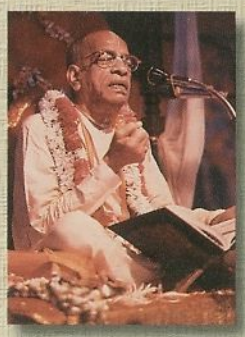
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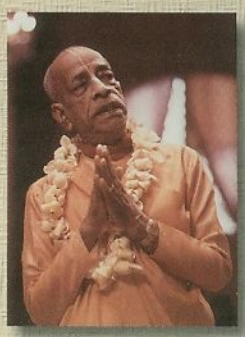
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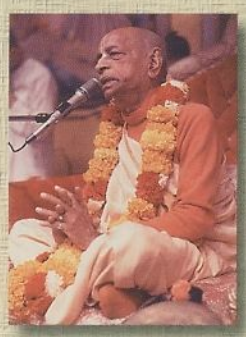
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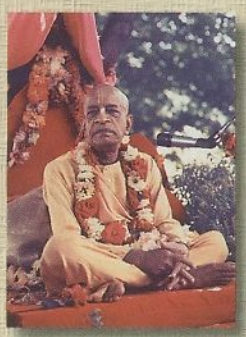
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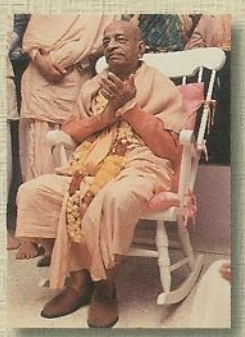
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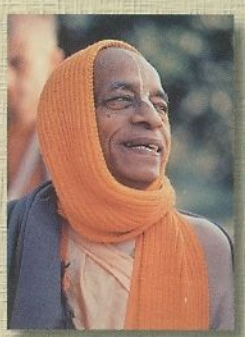
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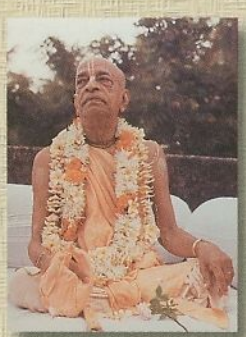
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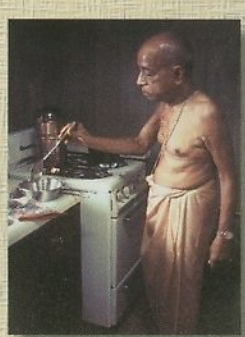
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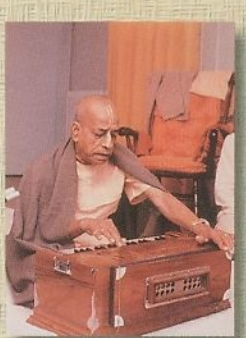
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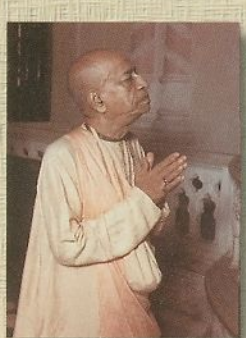
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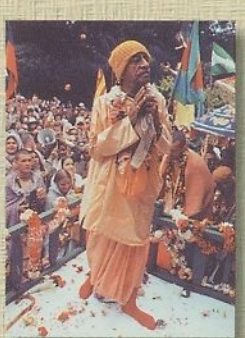
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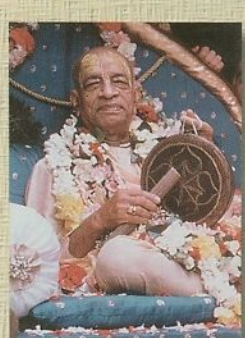
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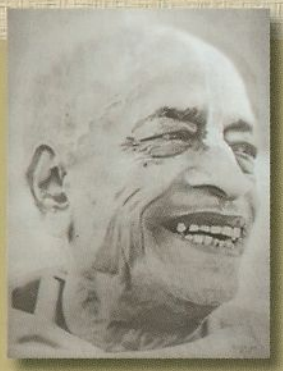

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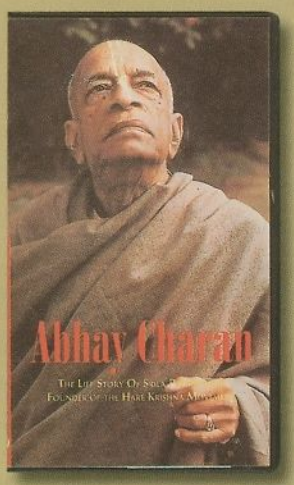

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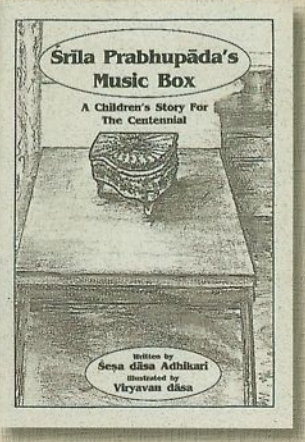

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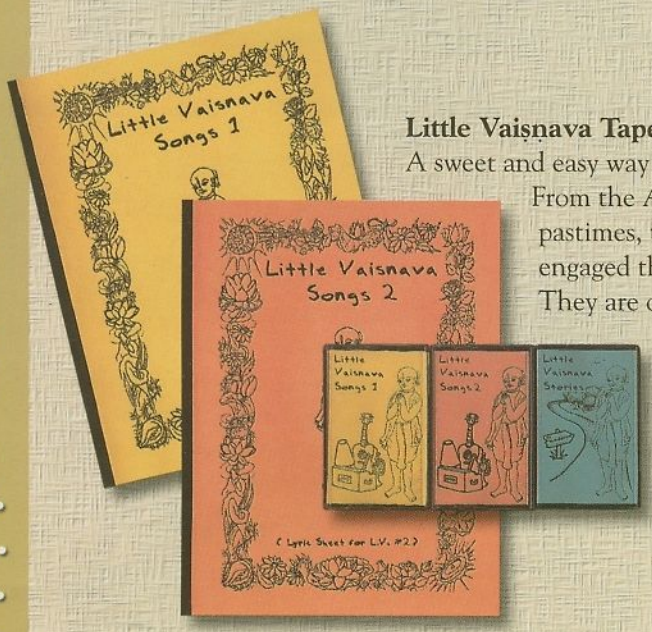

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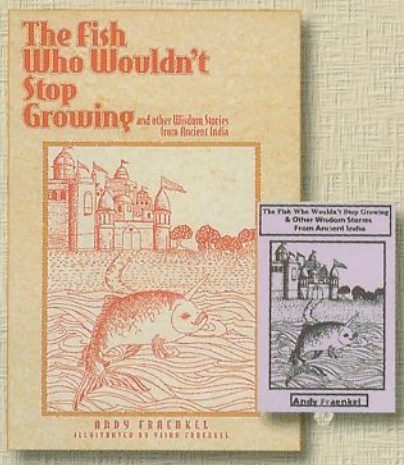

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His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.2.8, Purport

◆

The holy name of the Lord is never revealed to one who is situated in the bodily concept of life and thinks in terms of "I" and "mine." If one doesn't reject the enjoying mentality, the transcendental platform will never be attained.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura
Prākṛta-rasa Śata-dūṣiṇī

◆

If you become conscious of Me, you will pass over all the obstacles of conditioned life by My grace. If, however, you do not work in such consciousness but act through false ego, not hearing Me, you will be lost.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa
Bhagavad-gītā 18.58

One who daily sings the glories of Yaśoda's son [Kṛṣṇa], which are as cooling as sandalwood and camphor, is not troubled by the days of the Kali-yuga, for at every step he experiences a torrential flood of the sweetest nectar.

Śrī Kaviratna
Padyāvalī 41

◆

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the only shelter of everyone. Anyone desiring to be protected by others is certainly a great fool who desires to cross the sea by holding the tail of a dog.

Devas
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.9.22

◆

This body, which is eatable by jackals and dogs after death, does not actually do any good for me, the spirit soul. It is usable only for a short time and may perish at any moment. The body and its possessions, its riches and relatives, must all be engaged for the benefit of others, or else they will be sources of tribulation and misery.

Sage Dadhīci
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.10.10

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